

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY.

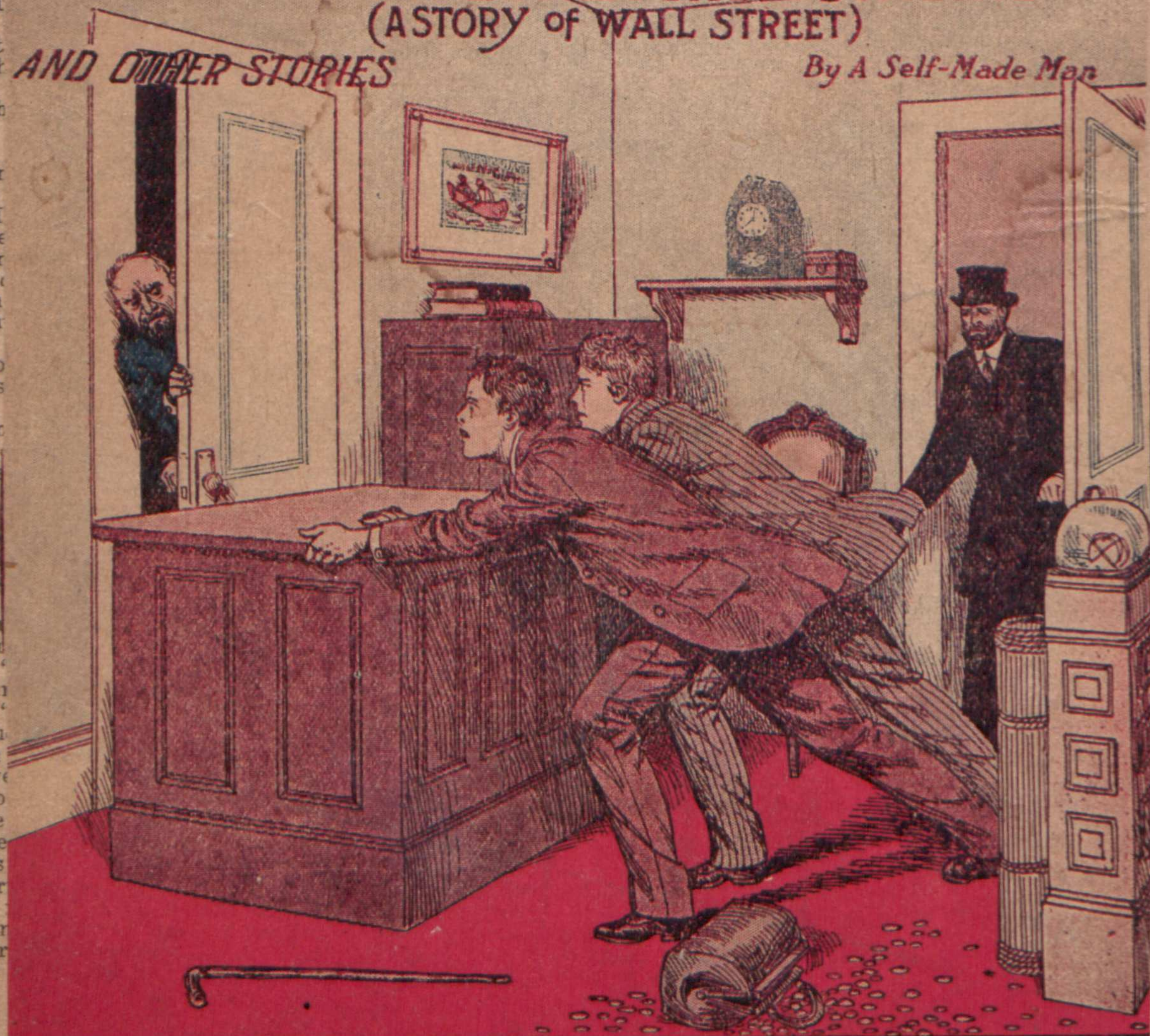
STORIES OF BOYS THAT MAKE MONEY.

AFTER A GOLDEN STAKE OR BREAKING A "BUCKET SHOP" COMBINE

(A STORY OF WALL STREET)

AND OTHER STORIES

By A Self-Made Man



"Let me out! Let me out!" roared Higgings, pushing against the door with all his might. "Not much," replied Bob. "You'll stay in that closet till you agree to our terms." Just then Broker Osgood walked into the office.

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FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

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AFTER A GOLDEN STAKE

OR, BREAKING A "BUCKETSHOP" COMBINE

BY A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.—Bounced from a Bucketshop.

"Say, Will, I don't like the way things are done in this shop," said Bob Bartling, one of the junior clerks employed by the Mutual Brokerage and Investment Co., of No. — Broadway, one day between twelve and one.

"Neither do I," replied Will Goode, another junior clerk of the same house.

"It's nothing but a bucketshop, and the majority of our customers don't have even a run for their money."

"That's right. It's walk into my parlor said the spider to the flies."

"And J. Higgins, Esq., is the spider."

"Rather a thin spider. He ought to grow fat on his stealings."

"His bank account is fat enough, I'll warrant. He's only one of the spiders. The Mutual Brokerage and Investment Co. has offices in Boston and Philadelphia, and each one has its own particular spider in the background. The three are in cahoots to plunder the foolish flies who walk into their webs."

"The bucketshop business is a fierce game. I don't see that the loan sharks have anything on us. We do the work up quicker. A man may run a long time with the money-lenders before he finds himself so tangled up that he can't turn. Here we gobble up his little bank-roll at once if he gives us half a chance."

"I read a story once called the 'Marble Heart.' J. Higgins, Esq., puts me in mind of the hero of that narrative. It takes a marble heart to gaze calmly upon the financial wrecks that have gone ashore in this office."

"You remember the man who committed suicide under dramatic circumstances in Central Park a month ago?"

"I remember. The man was John Smith, one of our customers."

"One newspaper headed the story 'Ruined by a Bucketshop.' Then it went on to tell how Smith, an industrious mechanic, after working hard for twenty years at his trade, had saved enough money to buy a home for his family in the Bronx. He had just cleaned up the mortgage and had the property free and clear when some friends of his persuaded him that it was as easy to make a fortune in Wall Street, speculating in stocks, as to roll off a log. Smith had \$100 that he had no immediate use for, and he was induced to come here and put it up on a marginal deal in Erie. In three days he won \$300. Nine times out of

ten when a person puts up \$100, or half of that, in this office he loses it. Had Smith lost that \$100 he probably would not have taken another shy, and all would have been well with him to-day. To cop \$300 so easily in such a short time gave Smith visions of opulence in the near future. He put up \$400, doubtless expecting to make \$1,000, and——"

"Yes, I know. The stock went down and J. Higgins, Esq., called on him for additional margin. He had no way of raising it except by mortgaging his house again, and as he could not put the matter through a trust company quick enough, he called on J. Higgins, Esq., and asked him what he should do. J. Higgins, Esq., bubbling over with the milk of human kindness toward his customers, obligingly agreed to take his note."

"Exactly. And as the price of the stock remained down, Higgins advised him to buy another stock, which he said was a sure winner, and took his note for \$1,000 to cover the margin."

"The bottom fell out of the stock, and J. Higgins, Esq., called on him for another \$1,000 to save his deposit, and took his note for the money. Inside of a month Smith owed this company \$3,000. Our esteemed boss called on him suddenly for a settlement. Smith couldn't settle, so the Mutual Brokerage and Investment Co. sued him for the money, won the suit, and the sheriff attached the house to satisfy the judgment. The house was sold and bought in by one of J. Higgins' friends at a bargain, and Smith received a statement showing that he was still indebted to us in the sum of \$1,200."

"Whereupon he committed suicide," said Will.

"He did, poor fellow, and there are others who feel like doing the same if the truth were known. Take it from me, this bucketshop business is——"

Will suddenly clapped his hand over Bob's mouth, choking off further utterance.

"Hush!" he said in his ear. "I'm afraid we've put our foot in it."

"What do you mean?"

"I thought Miss Taggart was out to her lunch, but she wasn't. She's been in her den all the time we've been talking, and I'll bet a dollar the old maid heard every word we said."

"Who cares?"

"She'll tell Mr. Higgins what a fine opinion we have of the office."

"Here comes J. Higgins, Esq., now, looking as if butter wouldn't melt in his mouth."

"He's gone into his room, and there goes the old maid to tell him what she heard us say," said Will.

Bob turned around and saw Mr. Higgins' confidential stenographer, a sour-faced-looking woman of thirty-five, stalking toward the private room. In a few minutes Miss Taggert came out. Marching up to the desk where the two boys were engaged, she said, in an icy tone:

"Mr. Higgins would like to see both of you in his room."

"We are in for it!" said Bob, in a whisper, as he got off his stool.

"I'd like to tell the old girl what I think of her," said Will, with an unfriendly look toward the den into which the lady had retreated.

The boys obeyed the summons and presented themselves before Mr. Higgins.

"I understand that you young men have been criticizing the business methods of this office," said the manager, with a frown.

"Who told you we have been doing so?" asked Bob.

"No matter. My source of information is reliable."

"Meaning that it came through Miss Taggert."

"You, Goode, referred to me as a spider—a thin spider, who ought to grow fat on my stealings. Do you deny that you made use of that language?"

"I admit that Bob and I were speaking about spiders, but there is no evidence to show that we were referring to you," replied Will evasively.

"You, Bartling, compared me with the hero of a story called the 'Marble Heart.' And you said that it took a marble heart to gaze calmly on the financial wrecks caused by this office. Did you, or did you not, use those words?"

"I used them," admitted Bob boldly.

"And you referred to me?"

"I did," said the boy, seeing no use of equivocation.

Mr. Higgins' face got as red as a beet.

"Both of you resurrected a newspaper lie about a former customer of ours by the name of Smith, who committed suicide in Central Park because he lost his money on the market. The story in question was aimed at this establishment and was printed after I refused to be bled by a certain newspaper reporter when the offer was made to me that it would be suppressed for a certain sum of money. The story was a tissue of falsehoods—a blackmailing device, such as some rascals make use of to pad their bank accounts. No business man is safe against those cormorants. By rehashing that story you took a satisfaction in discrediting the office that employs you. As I want no traitors in my place, I discharge both of you on the spot. Go to the cashier, get your wages for the week, and then clear out," said Higgins.

"That suits me," said Bob independently. "Ever since you deliberately robbed Smith of his life's savings and drove him to take his own life in utter despair at the prospect ahead, I've been figuring on getting out of this office."

The boys walked up to the cashier, told him they had been fired, and asked for their wages.

"You're joking, aren't you?" said the cashier.

"No, Mr. Caslon. We passed a few remarks concerning this establishment which were re-

ported to J. Higgins, Esq., by his stenographer, and as the boss didn't fancy hearing the truth, he told us that he had no further use for our services. He directed us to apply to you for our week's pay and get out at once. We are obeying his orders, so produce the mazuma and we will remove ourselves from the domains of J. Higgins, Esq., financial pirate, bucketshop manager, and all-around despoiler of the unwary speculator."

"I don't wonder you were discharged, if you entertain that opinion of Mr. Higgins," said the cashier. "What do you intend doing?"

"Write a book on the subject of 'Bucketshops and the Men Behind Them,'" chuckled Bob. "I think I would be performing a duty to the speculative public."

"I see you doing it," said the cashier dryly, as he counted out their wages.

But before the boys went out of the office Bob looked into the stenographer's room and made some very caustic remarks about an old maid sticking her nose into everybody's business, etc. Then they walked out of the office.

CHAPTER II.—Bob and Will Meet Good Luck.

"I suppose we must start in and look for other jobs," said Will, as they stepped out on the sidewalk.

"We have the rest of the week to do that in," said Bob.

"Two days and a half is none too much. If we each get a job by Saturday, we'll be doing mighty well."

"I don't think I'll look for a new situation. I've got a deal on at the little bank where a person stands a square show, and I'm going to devote my attention to watching it."

"I remember you told me that when you went to lunch the other day you bought 100 shares of A. & B."

"I bought it at 90 and now it's 92. I've got the tip that it will go over par inside of ten days."

"I wish I had some money; I'd get in on that myself."

"I'm sorry you haven't, for it's a sure winner."

"If I was worth as much as you, I wouldn't care if I was out of a job for a month."

Both boys lived in the Flatbush district of Brooklyn—Bob with his widowed mother and a sister who worked in a department store in the business section of Brooklyn, and Will with his parents, his father being a bookkeeper in Manhattan. The weekly wages of both boys cut quite a figure in the family support. Bob, having made \$1,300 speculating in the stock market, didn't feel the loss of his position, particularly as he stood to win another \$1,000 or more on the deal he had in hand. It was different with Will Goode. His folks were not over-supplied with money, while he didn't have any superfluous funds himself.

After eating lunch, the boys went up to a certain little bank on Nassau street and stayed there till three o'clock, during which time there was no change in the standing of A. & B. When they came out on the street again, they met a mutual friend who was a messenger for a broker, and that lad was surprised to hear that they were out of work.

"Broker Zahn, whose office is next to ours, wants a clerk," said the messenger, whose name was Sam Mason. "There's a chance for one of you fellows."

"Call on him, Will, and see if you can catch on," said Bob.

Will, who was anxious to connect with something as soon as possible, started off, promising to meet Bob at the Battery in half an hour or so. After parting with Sam Mason, Bob strolled down to the Battery and took his seat on a bench facing the sea wall. In the course of three-quarters of an hour Will came along. His demeanor indicated something out of the usual, so Bob figured that he had captured the position.

"Hi, Will, here I am!" he said.

His friend glided up and sat down beside him.

"Get the job?" asked Bob.

"No, I was too late. Mr. Zahn had hired somebody."

"You don't look much disappointed over your failure to catch on."

"That's because something has happened," said Will, with sparkling eyes.

"I found a pocketbook with \$1,200 in it."

"The dickens you did!"

Will looked cautiously around and then produced the pocketbook. He opened it and showed twelve \$100 bills.

"That's a big find. Any clue to the owner?"

"Not the slightest. There isn't anything in the wallet but the money."

"I guess you can claim it, then. You're lucky. If you hadn't lost your job to-day, some other fellow would have found it."

"I'm going to put every cent of it up on A. & B. in the morning. If I lose it, I won't be any worse off than I was when I called on Zahn. If I win, I'll be worth as much as you."

"You'll stand the same show of winning as I do, and I regard my chance as first-class. If I were you, I wouldn't put up more than \$1,000. It will be handy to have \$200 to fall back on, supposing a screw was to work loose. I've got \$300 outside of the money up on my deal."

Will decided that his friend's suggestion was a wise one, and he determined to follow it. The boys remained at the Battery till five o'clock and then started for home. They were not going to tell their parents that they had lost their positions, for each saw his way clear to turning in the regular amount, not only on the coming Saturday but on many succeeding Saturdays thereafter. Next morning they met at their usual corner in Flatbush and came to Manhattan together. They made straight for the little bank, where Will bought 100 shares of A. & B. at 92, and the boys remained, watching the blackboard, till they got hungry and went to lunch. The stock advanced only one-eighth up to that time. During the afternoon it went up another eighth.

"I'm \$50 ahead, at any rate," said Will, when they left the bank at a quarter after three.

Next day was Saturday, and the boys were on hand at the little bank.

"I suppose the clerks at the Mutual Brokerage and Investment Co. are sympathizing with us," said Will. "I wonder who our successors are?"

"Miss Taggart isn't sympathizing with us," chuckled Bob. "I'll bet she hasn't recovered from the rap I gave her."

"If she could have killed you with a look, she'd have favored you with one."

"There goes A. & B. up another eighth!" said Bob.

The stock closed at noon at 93 1-8, and after lunch the boys went home and handed over to each of their mothers their regular weekly contribution to the family resources. On Monday the boys made the little bank their camping-ground most of the time. A. & B. continued to advance during the week and closed at 99 on Saturday. On the following Monday it took a jump of three points, and next day it boomed to 110 and a fraction amid great excitement in the Exchange. The boys sold out, Bob clearing \$2,000 and Will \$1,800. It would be superfluous to say that they felt uncommonly good.

CHAPTER III.—Bob and Will Have a Narrow Squeak.

On the following afternoon they collected their money.

"Say, old man," said Bob to his friend, "let's go in partnership and make a regular business of speculating."

"I'm on," said Will promptly. "Let's open an office and stick out our shingles as brokers."

"That would be expensive. We'd better carry our office in our hats for a while. We can hire a room later," said Bob.

"How much shall we put up as our capital?"

"You have \$3,000."

"Yes."

"You'll need something on the outside, so we'll slap in \$2,500 apiece. Five thousand dollars will do very well to make a start on."

"All right. As you know more about the game than I do, you'd better take charge of the stake. Here's my contribution to the partnership. Shall we sign an agreement?"

"Yes. I'll buy a couple of blanks, fill them out to our mutual satisfaction and then we'll both sign them."

"All right. Let's settle the business at once. Bartling & Goode, Speculators. That will sound all right. It wouldn't look bad painted on the glass pane of an office door. How Miss Taggart would stare if she saw it!"

"I fancy she'd have a fit, and an ambulance would have to be called."

Bob got a couple of printed partnership blanks, filled them out to cover the requirements of the boy firm and they signed them before a notary, each retaining a copy. For a day or two they did nothing more strenuous than to sit in the waiting room of the little bank and watch the blackboard, noting the stock quotations as they were chalked up. Then they noticed that P. & Q. shares were going up, and at Bob's suggestion the firm went into the stock to the extent of \$300 shares on margin, at 85. Inside of a week the price reached 90 and a fraction, and as Bob thought that was as far as they ought to risk their chances, they closed out the deal at a profit of \$1,500.

One afternoon as they were walking up Broadway toward City Hall Park and the Brooklyn Bridge entrance they passed the bucketship stenographer.

"How do you do, Miss Taggert!" said Bob, bestowing an exaggerated bow on the old maid. "Charming afternoon, isn't it? How is J. Higgins, Esq.?"

The lady gave him a freezing look and disdained to notice him or Will further.

"My, what a look she gave you, Bob!" laughed Will.

They stopped at the corner of Ann street to purchase some shoe laces of a curb vender, and were about to go on when they heard a sudden shriek. Miss Taggert had started to cross Ann street when an express wagon bore down on her from one side and a truck from the other, and she became paralyzed with fright. She would assuredly have been hurt had not Bob, seeing his peril, sprang forward, seized her and dragged her out of the danger zone. The spinster looked very white about the eyes and seemed on the point of fainting.

The boys led her across the narrow street and Bob rushed into a saloon and got some brandy, a portion of which they got her to take. The fright and the knowledge that Bob had saved her life altered the lady's demeanor somewhat, but did not wholly soften her feelings toward Bob and Will. As soon as she had pulled herself together she bestowed a curt "Thank you" on Bob and hastened on her way, as if anxious to get as far away from the boys as possible.

That night, when Bob finished his supper, he sat down and thought over the incident of the afternoon. Finally he decided that it was his duty to apologize to Miss Taggert for the insulting rap he had given her the day he and Will were fired. While he was satisfied he hadn't given her any more than she deserved, still, as he had told Will, he felt that he had acted unmanly in striking back at her. The further fact that he had saved her from injury did not wipe out his conduct toward her, and though he did not like her a bit more than before, he determined to let that be his revenge for what he and Will owed her and to set himself right, in his own opinion, by apologizing for his cutting words. He wrote the note in a manly way, and next morning mailed it to her in Wall Street.

Several days passed before Bob and Will saw another promising chance to get in on the market; then Bob bought 500 shares of O. & H., at 79. Hardly had they got in on this deal before the price began to drop steadily from 79 to 70, when the bank called on Bob for additional margin.

"We're up against it, Will, old man," he said. "We are on the ragged edge. We have only \$1,500 left, and that will add only three points to our margin of safety. Still, three points may be enough to save our goose from being cooked. If it isn't enough, why, we'll be wiped out as cleanly as was John Smith."

"Put up the \$1,500. We must save the \$5,000 if we can," said Will. "This is where the path of the speculator is not a bed of roses."

So Bob put up the money and rejoined his partner on the bench to watch the fate of the firm's entire cash capital. The price closed that day at 69 and a fraction, which gave the boys very little leeway. Another call for more margin would find them unable to respond, and if the price dropped below 66 1-2 they would be wiped out. They reached the little bank next morning in a very gloomy frame of mind, which was not

improved by the opening quotation of 69, followed by 68 7-8.

The boys watched the blackboard as if something more important than mere money hung upon the issue of the passing minutes. Five minutes elapsed without any new quotation being put up, and then 69 came out on the board. For the first time since the slump set in, the price had gone up an eighth.

"That's encouraging," said Bob. "I hope the drop has stopped and that it will go up now for a welcome change," said Bob.

The next quotation was 69 1-8. It was like the sun shining through a rift in an overcast sky, portending a change for the better. In the course of an hour O. & H. was up to 70, where it stopped, leaving the young speculators still something over \$4,500 to the bad, but with hopes for the future. These hopes were improved next day when the stock went to 72.

"I guess the worst is over," said Bob. "That \$1,500 we had left saved our bacon, from present indications."

The rest of the week saw O. & H. go slowly back to the figure at which the boys had purchased it, and with every little rise their anticipations of an ultimate profit out of the deal grew stronger. On Tuesday of the succeeding week O. & H. took a sudden grip on the market and advanced five points, creating some excitement in the Exchange. Next day it continued to boom, reaching 92.

The boys held on till the price went to 96 and then sold out, making \$8,500. This success made the firm worth \$15,000, and Will said he guessed they could afford to rent a small office somewhere. Bob offered no further objection to his partner's wishes, and they started to look up a suitable office. Will found a room for rent at a reasonable price in an old-time building on Hanover street, near Wall, and brought Bob around to see it.

"It will do," nodded Bob, after learning the rent.

The boys closed with the janitor, and that afternoon signed a lease up to the first of the coming May, and paid the first month's rent. They lost no time in furnishing it with a couple of desks (one a flat-top for Will, the other a roll-top for Bob), a second-hand safe, a used rug and chairs that had done prior service in another office, together with other necessary articles. They purchased three steel engravings to relieve the bareness of the walls, and had a ticker installed. Finally they had their names put on the glass half of the door, as follows:

"BARTLING & GOODE, Stocks and Bonds."

"Now we'll pass for real brokers," grinned Will.

"That is what we intend to be some day, so we might as well make a bluff at it from the start," nodded Bob.

CHAPTER IV.—Bartling & Goode, Stocks and Bonds.

Bob and Will's office was all ready for business by Saturday noon, and with a feeling of satisfaction, natural under the circumstances, they lock-

ed up and went to lunch. After lunch they started for Broadway, and on the way encountered Ames, a bucketshop clerk of Higgins'.

"Hello, chappies!" he greeted them. "I suppose you're working by this time?"

"I don't know that we've done any loafing since we separated ourselves from J. Higgins, Esq.," replied Bob chipperly.

"Why, you didn't have a job the last time I saw you!"

"We had the same job we have now. We are working for the firm of Bartling & Goode."

"Bartling & Goode! Those are your own names."

"Yes, I guess we have the best claim to them."

"Are you two in partnership?"

"We are."

"Get out!" exclaimed Ames incredulously.

"That's right," said Bob. "Come on and take a look at our den."

They retraced their steps, accompanied by Ames.

"How are J. Higgins, Esq., and the fair Miss Taggart?" asked Bob, as they walked along.

"Same as ever."

"So I supposed. Are the new clerks filling our shoes all right?"

"They're doing well enough. They were rather thick with Miss Taggart at first, but she holds them at a distance now. She is not a lady you can become familiar with."

"Doing as much business as ever?"

"About the same."

By this time they had reached the office building in Hanover street, and the boys took Ames up to their office.

"How does our sign strike you?" asked Bob.

"You appear to be brokers in name, if in nothing else," said Ames.

They entered the office.

"You are certainly putting up a good bluff," said the clerk, looking around. "You must have some capital to do this sort of thing."

"We have enough to keep us out of the poorhouse for a while."

"Have a cigar?" asked Will, producing a box from his desk.

"Thanks!" said Ames, helping himself to one and lighting it. "I presume you expect to make a living here?"

"We are not in Wall Street simply for the good of our health."

"Well, I wish you luck. I must tell Miss Taggart."

After remaining twenty minutes in the office, they left, and the boys parted with Ames at the corner. On Monday morning the boys reached their office about half-past nine and took possession of their respective desks. They had been out of the bucketshop ten weeks now and their folks had not the least suspicion of the fact. They had turned in their money promptly each Saturday when they got home, just as if it were part of their wages, so it really made no difference at all at home. The boys remained in their office till noon, when they went to lunch.

Then Will went up to the little bank for a change, while Bob returned to their headquarters. Hardly had he got interested in a mining journal he had bought when there came a tap on the door.

"Come in," he said, and then, to his surprise, Miss Taggart walked in.

"Pleased to see you, Miss Taggart," said Bob, jumping up and handing her a chair.

She bowed and sat down. It struck the boy that she looked less vinegary than usual.

"I learned from Mr. Ames that you and your friend Goode were in business together, and I got your address from him," she began. "I decided to call and thank you for the service you rendered me some weeks back, and also to acknowledge the receipt of your letter and apology, which I accept in the spirit it was made."

"You are quite welcome to the service I rendered you, in which my partner assisted to some extent. I would have done the same for any one under the same circumstances. I am glad you have accepted my apology for the remarks I was guilty of. Will and myself felt kind of hot against you for reporting our conversation to the boss, but I suppose you felt it was your duty to do it, and in any case we had no right to express our sentiments in the office; so I suppose we brought our discharge upon ourselves. I apologized to you because I felt that I had not acted like a gentleman, no matter if I believe you deserved my remarks. In getting us bounced you really conferred a favor on us, for we have done ever so much better since we left the office than while we were connected with it, and so, in behalf of my partner and myself, I tender you our thanks," said Bob.

"I am glad to see that you are doing well, and whatever antagonism formerly existed between us is now over on my part," said the lady.

"And on ours, too, Miss Taggart."

Miss Taggart remained a few minutes longer, and then took her leave. When Will came in Bob told him about the lady's visit.

"Well, I'll be jiggered," said Will, much astonished. "That Miss Taggart would call on us was about the last thing I should consider as likely to happen. I guess she felt that she owed you considerable of an obligation, and she couldn't rest easy till she squared matters with you."

"How does the market look from the blackboard?" asked Bob.

"Strong," replied Will.

"Any suggestions as to a deal?"

"No. I'd rather you'd decide on that point."

"Well, we'll go over the situation together."

At that moment the door opened and Sam Mason stuck his head in.

"For the love of Mike!" he exclaimed, following with his body. "Are you chaps in business?"

"Our sign says so, doesn't it?"

"That's what attracted my attention, but I couldn't believe it really stood for you. But I had to look in to see who Bartling & Goode were."

"Now that you've had an ocular demonstration you're satisfied as to the identity of the firm, I hope."

"When did you fellows open up?"

"This is practically our first day," replied Bob.

"Well, it's certainly a surprise to me. You chaps must have saved your money, or discovered a wad somewhere, to be able to open up as brokers."

"We haven't started to make any entries in our account books so far. What do you know?"

"I know something that'll put money in your pockets if you've got the money to work it."

"That so? Let's hear about it."

"Do I get a rake-off if I put you wise?" asked Sam.

"If the tip is worth it, we'll take care of you."

"It's a sure winner, and I want ten per cent."

"Tell us what your tip is, and if we think it worth the risk, we'll pay you ten per cent. of the profits."

"It's a bargain," said Sam, who then told them how he had heard a conversation between his boss and a big operator, which indicated that a syndicate had been formed to corner X. & Y. stock and then boom the price. My boss is going to do the buying."

"He is?"

"Yes. He's on the job already, making purchases on the quiet. In a day or two he'll be bidding for the stock in the board room."

After some further talk on the subject Sam went away.

"I guess that's a good tip," said Bob to his partner. "Sam can be relied on for straight goods."

"We'd better get in on it right away. How much shall we buy?"

"A thousand shares. I'll go up to the bank and make the deal."

Bob took \$10,000 of the firm's capital out of the safe and started for the little bank.

CHAPTER V.—Bob Saves Broker Osgood.

Bob bought the 1,000 shares of X. & Y. for 68 and then returned to the office. The boys stayed till a quarter of five and then started for home. Next day, as Bob was passing down Exchange place, he saw a man cleaning windows on a short, red ladder on the third floor. Suddenly the ladder slipped. The man caught hold of the double sashes which, fortunately for him, happened to both be down at the moment, and saved himself, but he smashed the big outer pane with the toes of his boots. Down came a shower of glass and with it the dislodged ladder. At that moment a well-dressed man came out on the ground floor, directly in the path of the ladder. Only for the quick action on Bob's part, he would have been felled to the ground and in all likelihood injured.

Bob grabbed him and pulled him just far enough away to save him. The ladder struck the sidewalk with a crash and fell over against the gentleman's legs.

"That was a narrow shave, sir," said Bob.

"My heavens, yes!" gasped the gentleman. "You saved me, and I can't thank you too much for your timely aid."

"That's all right, sir. I couldn't see you struck down without making an effort in your behalf."

"Your presence of mind is to be commended. What is your name?"

"Robert Bartling."

"Mine is William Osgood. I'm a stock broker. You are employed in the district, I suppose?"

"No, sir; I'm in business with a friend on Hanover street. There is our card."

"What! You are in the brokerage business, too?"

"We have just started, and are not doing any outside business yet."

"Well, I'm under great obligations to you. Here is my card. Call around and see me this afternoon after three, if convenient."

"I will try to do so."

The broker then shook hands with him and went on his way, to escape the crowd which had begun to collect, and Bob went in the opposite direction. At half-past three he called at Mr. Osgood's office and sent in his name. He was admitted at once and found the broker at his desk with a pretty, stylishly dressed girl of seventeen beside him.

"Glad to see you, Bartling," said Osgood, getting up and shaking him by the hand. "Let me present you to my daughter. Gertie, this is Robert Bartling, the boy who saved me from being struck by the ladder on Exchange place this morning."

Bob expressed the pleasure of making the young lady's acquaintance, and the girl told him how grateful she was to him for saving her father.

"Really, it was quite a shock to me when my father told me of the narrow escape he had had. I am sure we will always appreciate what we owe you, Mr. Bartling," she said, with a winsome look that quite captured Bob.

"Oh, anybody would have done what I did," said Bob.

"I'm not sure about that," said Mr. Osgood. "You took some risk yourself in saving me, for you couldn't calculate just where the ladder would fall."

"I might have done so; but when a fellow has to act quick he can't stop to figure on the chances."

Mr. Osgood asked Bob who his partner was in business.

"A friend of mine named Will Goode."

"Goode! The name is not familiar to me. He is not a member of the Exchange?"

"Hardly," laughed Bob. "He's just a boy about my own age."

"Mr. Goode looked astonished."

"Then the firm of Bartling & Goode is a boy firm?"

"Yes, sir. Neither of us will be of legal age for two years yet."

"You have just commenced business?"

"Yes," nodded Bob.

Miss Osgood eyed Bob with fresh interest when he declared that his partner was also a boy. Such a firm was evidently a novelty in Wall Street, and the young lady judged that Bob and his business associate must be uncommonly smart to start out for themselves as real brokers, like her father.

"You and your partner have been working for some firm in the Street up to the time you branched out for yourselves, I presume?" said Mr. Osgood.

"We were employed by the Mutual Brokerage and Investment Co., of No. — Broadway, but it wasn't just the kind of place that we cared to continue with."

"I know the establishment," said the broker, with a frown. "It is a notorious bucketshop, which has been shown up in the papers but still manages to do business, which shows that the

crop of foolish people in this world is inexhaustible."

"That's right, sir. I hope you won't think any the worse of us because we were connected with the place. We were glad to cut loose from it."

"Do you intend to continue speculating?"

"Yes, sir. We can't expect to do anything to speak of as brokers yet a while. There is really nothing else for us to do until we get to be known as regular traders. Besides, we need more capital, and the only way we can get it is to be lucky on the market."

"But suppose you lose the capital you have acquired?"

"That is one of the business risks we are up against."

Mr. Osgood shook his head.

"I'm afraid you are taking desperate chances."

"The proof of the pudding is in the eating."

"I'm afraid the proof of the pudding is in the fact that most people who speculate lose their money."

"We haven't any fault to find with our luck so far. We've made a matter of \$15,000 in ten weeks, counting the first venture we went into independently."

"You've been very fortunate, but you can hardly expect to have such luck continue."

"At any rate, we hope to make more than we lose," said Bob.

After a little further talk Broker Osgood invited Bob to call at his home, as he was sure his wife would want to know him after what had happened in Exchange place. Bob promised that he would do so, for he saw the chance to get better acquainted with Miss Osgood, in whom he took considerable interest. Mr. Osgood gave him his home address and then Bob took his leave.

CHAPTER VI.—On the Road to a Golden Stake.

Two days afterward a package was delivered at the office of Bartling & Goode, directed to Bob himself. It bore the imprint of a well-known John street jeweler. When Bob opened it he found a letter and a box. The letter was from Broker Osgood, begging him to accept the inclosed present as a slight evidence of his appreciation for Bob's services in Exchange place. The present proved to be a pair of diamond cuff buttons. They were very handsome and quite valuable. Sam Mason dropped in that day to find out whether his friends had bought any X. & Y. yet.

"Sure we've bought some," said Bob.

"How much?" asked Sam.

"One thousand shares."

"Great mackerel! Are you chaps worth \$10,000?" asked Sam.

"What do you suppose we went into business on—pure gall?"

"No. I thought you might have two or three thousand dollars, but ten—that's a bunch of money."

"If your tip is as good as we are banking on, we ought to double that money and pay you your rake-off besides."

"The tip is all right. If you work it right you ought to clear \$15,000, for I heard the operator

tell my boss that the syndicate expected to force it up from fifteen to twenty points."

"Is that so? I hope they do it. We are after all we can make."

In a day or two Will got a ticket and went into the Stock Exchange gallery, from which elevated point he commanded a good view of the floor below. He knew Sam's boss by sight, and he saw him hovering around the X. & Y. pole. Watching his actions carefully, he was soon satisfied that he was buying the stock whenever it was offered, taking in all he could get hold of. He returned to his office and reported to Bob.

"That fully confirms Sam's statement that his boss is doing the buying," said Bob, "and we may safely assume he is working in the interest of a syndicate. The price has already advanced a point, but I wouldn't be surprised to see it go down several points if the syndicate finds that the stock comes to the surface too slowly."

"We can stand a drop of fourteen points, and that's more than is likely to happen," said Will.

That afternoon X. & Y. dropped half a point, and the next day went down a full point; then it recovered half a point. It fluctuated constantly during the week, but always went a little higher each time, reaching 70 on Saturday. The boys looked for another good rise the next week, and they were not disappointed. The price went to 82.

Will went to the gallery of the Exchange every day up to lunch time, when Bob took his place. The brokers who had sold short on Saturday, chancing that the stock would not go much higher, hastily sold on Monday at a loss, but the sales did not seem to affect the upward tendency of X. & Y. It opened at 82 1-8 on Tuesday and continued on during the day to 88 3-8. A great volume of business was done in the shares. As soon as Bob saw the printed market list, which was issued as soon as possible after the close of business at the exchange he became satisfied that the syndicate was unloading under cover of the rise. Without waiting to hear from Sam, he ran up to the little bank and ordered the sale of the firm's 1,000 shares first thing in the morning. When Sam came into the office at a quarter of four he told him that he had closed the deal out.

"Good!" replied Sam. "I came to tell you to do that. The price will go higher, in all probability, but only to cover the operations of the syndicate. My boss is out of it now, and another firm of brokers is selling."

The 1,000 shares were duly offered and sold next morning at 88 1-2, and when the young firm got its statement there was something over \$20,000 profit coming its way. As soon as the bank settled with Bob, he put \$2,025 in an envelope, addressed to Sam, and placed it in the safe to await that lad's coming.

"We are now worth \$33,000, Will, and that's too large an amount to trust in this safe of ours. I'm going to hire a safe-deposit box and put the bulk of the money in it. Then it will be quite safe."

The boys went to the vaults, transacted their business there, and then went to lunch. When Sam came in their office, around four o'clock, Bob showed him the statement from the little bank and then handed him his envelope.

"There you are, Sam. Don't blow it all in at once," he cautioned.

"Blow in nothing! What do you take me for? That \$2,000 will go straight into four savings banks. That's the disadvantage of not being able to deposit more than \$500 at a time inside of six months in any one bank that I care to use."

"You can do much better than that, Sam," said Bob. "The savings banks don't pay over four per cent. interest. Now you can go up to the — Trust Co., on Broadway, and buy \$100, \$500 or \$1,000 certificates of deposit, paying five per cent. interest. Those certificates are secured by first mortgages and the company's reserve fund. That is a better investment for you."

"I'll consider it," said Sam.

"All right. It's your money."

CHAPTER VII.—The Attempt on the Safe.

With a capital of \$33,000, Bob and Will felt like big moguls. They decided that it was time for them to notify their parents of the change in their business and financial circumstances. This they did that evening, and great was the surprise in their respective households. Will handed his mother \$500, and made his father a present of a handsome watch, while Bob gave his mother \$500 and his sister \$100, and told them to get new gowns, hats, shots, etc., at his expense. The boys met at their usual place next morning and proceeded to Wall Street.

"I think we will try and make a start at the brokerage business," said Bob. "To begin with, we'll put a standing advertisement in each of those newspapers," and he handed a list of three to his partner.

"Get up the advertisement and I'll stick it in the papers," said Will.

Bob wrote an advertisement similar to that of other brokers' announcements and handed it over. Will went out about half-past ten and Bob continued the perusal of several financial papers. At eleven o'clock the door opened and a man looked in.

"Is Mr. Bartling in?" he inquired.

"That's my name," said Bob.

The visitor stepped in, followed by another man.

"We would like to see Mr. Goode, too."

"He is out just now," returned Bob, eyeing his callers curiously.

"When will he be here?"

"Not for some time."

The men exchanged glances.

"We are from Goldfield," said the man who was doing the talking, "and want to make arrangements toward putting a new mine on the market. We have brought samples of the ore with us which we will show you. Hand me that suitcase, Jim, and then lock the door. You'll excuse the liberty we are taking, but this is a confidential matter and we don't care to have the object of our visit known in the financial district until we have closed with some brokerage firm, which we intend to pay well for its services."

The speaker placed the suitcase on Will's flat-top desk and hunted for the key to unlock it.

"I guess you have the key, Jim," he said.

The party by the name of Jim advanced, feeling in his pockets. Suddenly both men turned on Bob, seized him, and clapped a cloth over his face. The boy was taken by surprise, but realizing what he was up against, he put up the best struggle he could, which was not a very effective one, as the men had him at the greatest disadvantage. He felt his senses leaving him, and in another minute his struggles ceased and he became unconscious.

"He's safe now, Jim. Off with the cloth," said the other man.

Jim pulled off the cloth soaked with some drug and tossed it under the desk. The two men placed the boy's arms on the desk and let his head drop forward on them. At that moment the knob of the office door rattled and the men drew back against the wall. In another moment retreating footsteps were heard outside.

"It's all right, Jim. Open up the bag and get the tools. This safe is easy, and we ought to open it in half an hour without much trouble," said the man who was doing all the talking.

Jim opened the suitcase and took out a bunch of tools, which he brought to the safe. The other man fitted an up-to-date drill together to the bottom of which was attached a length of covered electric lighting wire with a connection to be attached to the electric fixtures after the bulb was removed.

"Now then, Jim, make the connection with that fixture and we'll go through these tumblers in short order," said the other.

While Jim was taking off the bulb the handle of the door was rattled again. Then came a smart rap on the glass. It was Will, who had unexpectedly returned. Finding the door locked, he supposed Bob was out, so he pulled out his key and shoved it into the lock, but it met with resistance. He stooped and looked into the hole. The key was on the inside and the door locked. That struck him as strange and caused him to rap on the glass. Receiving no answer and hearing no sound inside, he placed his eye to the key-hole again, but the key blocked all view of the interior. He took out his penknife and started prodding at the key.

The men inside understood what he was about and they slipped over out of range of the key-hole and the chief rascal drew a slungshot and glided close up to the door. In a few moments Will succeeded in dislodging the key, and it dropped inside. He looked through the hole and saw Bob bent over his desk, otherwise the office appeared untenanted.

"Something is wrong," he thought.

He stuck his own key in the lock, opened the door and rushed in. Whiz! came the slugshot at his head. The quickness of his entrance caused a miscalculation on the part of the chief rascal and the implement missed the back of Will's head and struck the rim of his derby, sending it flying off. The boy turned at once as the fellow was lifting the weapon to repeat the blow more effectively. He saw both the crooks and instantly grappled with the fellow holding the slungshot.

"Quick, Jim, down him!" cried his pal.

Jim rushed forward to seize Will. At that juncture Sam Mason appeared.

"Great mackerel!" he cried.

He launched out his fist and caught Jim in the

jaw. Then he went for the man for all he was worth. Will got a fresh grasp on the other man and putting out his foot, tripped him up and they both fell to the floor. Then a hard tussle for the mastery took place between them. Jim was not an easy customer to handle, but Sam Mason knew how to use his fists to good advantage, and he made matters interesting for the fellow. The door being open, the scrap attracted notice in the corridor.

The janitor, happening to get out at that floor, the sounds reached his ears, and he came to see what was up.

"What's the trouble here?" he asked.

"Crooks!" replied Will. "Give me a hand with this one."

That was enough for the janitor. He shut the door and jumped on the man the young tenant was holding down. He was a brawny Irishman, and the crook had little chance with him.

"Hold on to him!" said Will, letting go himself and grabbing the slungshot.

With the weapon in his hand he rushed to Sam's aid.

"Give in, you rascal, or I'll let you have a taste of this," he said.

Beset by two determined lads, Jim saw he had no chance at all. He made one desperate effort to break through them, and, failing, threw up the sponge. The boys threw Jim on the floor and bound his wrists behind his back with a handkerchief. Leaving Sam to watch him, Will went over to help the janitor secure the other. The man yielded to the inevitable, with many imprecations. He was bound, too, and then Will rushed to his partner's side.

At first he thought Bob was dead, but feeling of his heart, found it beating all right. He felt Bob's head over carefully for a lump, thinking he had been hit with the slungshot, but there was no evidence that he had been struck at all.

"Sure the b'y is drugged," said the janitor. "Can't I smell the stuff in the room?"

"That's so. I smell a strange odor myself. It comes from under the desk."

He bent down and picked up the rag.

"Whew!" he ejaculated. "It must be chloroform. I'd better send for an ambulance surgeon to bring my partner around. I reached the office just in time to prevent those fellows getting to work on our safe. Look at their tools on the rug."

He picked up the telephone book, looked up the nearest hospital and communicated with the place, asking that an ambulance be sent to the office building at once. Then he got in touch with the police station and asked that policemen be sent to take charge of the two crooks, explaining the facts of the case in outline. There was nothing else to do but keep an eye on the prisoners.

"How did you get around just in the nick of time, Sam?" Will asked him.

"I came up a while ago after my money, and found the door locked. I went on an errand and then stopped again on my way back to the office," replied Sam.

"It's lucky you did, or the rascals would easily have got away with me," said Will.

"I never was more surprised in my life when I came to the door and saw what was going on.

I just sailed in and I would have polished that fellow off myself in time," said Sam.

"If they'd got into our safe you would have lost your money, Sam."

"My! that would have broken my heart."

The janitor remained in the room till the ambulance surgeon appeared, brought up by Sam, who went down to watch for him. Sam, at the same time, told the elevator man where to send the policemen when they arrived. While the surgeon was working over the unconscious Bob the officers came, and Will told them the story of the affair as far as he was acquainted with it.

"Take the fellows away. We charge them with attempted burglary of the safe. You can see their tools on the floor. I came on the scene in time to interrupt their operations before they began," said Will.

One of the officers returned the tools to the suitcase and took it away with him, while his companions took charge of the crooks, whom they had handcuffed together. The surgeon worked some time over Bob, but finally brought him around. He was kind of dizzy and uncertain at first, but finally was able to tell what had happened to him. He was much relieved to hear that Will arrived in time not only to prevent the rascals putting their plans through, but to effect their capture as well.

"We had a lucky escape," he said.

"For which we can thank Sam," said Will. "I never would have been able to have held my own against those chaps. They would have put me out of business and then gone on with their job. They had one of their tools, a drill, attached to the electric light fixture. Those rascals are evidently up-to-date."

Sam got his money and carried it away, while the boys put on their hats and started for the station house to make a formal charge against the two crooks.

CHAPTER VIII.—Bob Meets With Trouble.

Next morning Bob and Will appeared against the two crooks at the Tombs Police Court, and Sam and the janitor also were on hand to give their testimony. The result was the rascals were held for the action of the grand jury. On their way back to their office Bob said that D. & L. stock looked good to him and he thought it would be a good idea to take a chance on it.

"All right, go ahead," said Will.

"We'll buy 1,000 shares. That will take \$10,000. Now that we've got a good capital at our back we can't very well get caught in the shuffle," said Bob.

"What is D. & L. selling at?"

"It opened at 75 this morning, and I guess it's about the same now."

They passed down Nassau street and saw Mr. Higgins approaching them.

"Here comes that financial pirate, J. Higgins, Esq.," said Bob. "I wonder if he will ever see his finish?"

"Not unless some person whom he has robbed goes gunning after him and puts a ball into his anatomy where it will do the most good."

Mr. Higgins saw the boys, and to their surprise he walked up to them.

"I hear you chaps have started a bucketshop of your own," he said.

"You heard wrong, Mr. Higgins," said Bob. "We had enough of bucketshops at your establishment. We don't believe in them."

"You might do worse than run a bucketshop," said Higgins, with an unpleasant look.

"You might mention something that's worse than running a bucketshop on the lines of the Mutual Brokerage and Investment Co.," said Bob.

"You think that's a very amusing remark, I suppose, young man, but it isn't. I may get you where the hair is short some time and then I won't forget your words, nor those you addressed to me the day you were discharged from my employ," said Higgins, in a menacing way.

"If you don't like to hear the truth, what did you stop us for?"

"To ask you a civil question. As you don't seem to appreciate my intentions, I will pass on," said the manager of the bucketshop.

He passed on and the boys went on their way.

"Mr. J. Higgins, Esq., had some other object in stopping us than merely making the inquiry he did," said Bob, "but my remarks choked him off. I'll bet he wanted to try and find out just how we were getting on."

"He didn't find out anything," chuckled Will.

"I should say not. Did you notice the covert threat he made—that some day he might get us where the hair is short?"

"I did; and he looked kind of wicked when he said it, too. He wouldn't do a thing to us if he got the chance."

"I don't imagine he'll get the chance. We are not doing business with him."

"I should say not. I feel sorry for those who have dealings with him."

"Forget him. We've something more important to talk about."

Bob stopped at the safe-deposit vault to get the money to put up on D. & L., while Will went on to the office. On his way back to the little bank Bob met Broker Osgood.

"Glad to see you, Bartling," he said. "How is business coming on with you?"

"We've just cleaned up \$18,000 on the X. & Y. boom," said Bob.

"Is it possible!" ejaculated the broker.

"Yes, sir. We bought at bedrock and held on pretty close to the top of the market."

"You boys have great luck. How came you to go into that stock when it was 'way down?" asked Mr. Osgood.

"Well, to tell you the truth, we got a tip that a syndicate was behind it."

"A tip! He was a good friend to put you on to such a good thing."

"Yes, he is very friendly toward the firm. The profit on that deal gave our capital quite a lift. We are now worth over \$30,000."

"Who executes your orders?"

"A little bank on Nassau street."

"With your capital, I should think you would go to a regular broker. That place is little better than a bucketshop."

"I know it has that reputation because you can buy as low as five shares of any stock on the list; but its methods are legitimate. It does not attempt to skin its patrons."

"I don't say it does, but it does a great deal of harm by encouraging persons of limited re-

sources to speculate. A regular broker will not take an order to buy or sell a stock under 100 shares, which calls for an investment of \$1,000, if the transaction is a marginal one. That rule prevents persons of limited capital from dealing with brokers. If there were a law in force which compelled bucketshops to do likewise, the speculative mania would be much decreased."

"As we have no particular reason for dealing with the little bank, since our transactions are above the 100-share limit, how would you like to act as our broker, Mr. Osgood?"

"I will execute any orders you care to give me with pleasure."

"All right. I was about to buy 1,000 shares of D. & L., on margin, for the firm's account. You can put the deal through for us."

"Very well. Come to my office. I am going there," said the broker.

Bob accompanied him and made the deal with Osgood.

"When are you coming up to the house, Bartling?" said Osgood. "My daughter would be pleased to see you again, and Mrs. Osgood is anxious to thank you for what you did for me."

"Well, I'll call Thursday evening, if that would be satisfactory."

"I think it would. I'll tell them to expect you on that evening."

Bob returned to the office and told Will he had bought the stock of Broker Osgood at 75.

"All right," nodded Will.

On Thursday evening Bob put on his best suit, added a few other frills, and left his home to call on the Osgoods, who lived in a handsome house in West 72d street, on the West Side of Manhattan. After reaching City Hall Park, Bob went down Chambers street and took a Sixth avenue train at West Broadway. He got out at the 72d street station and made his way to the broker's house. He received a warm welcome and was introduced to Mrs. Osgood. Gertie Osgood was arrayed in a charming house gown, and she had put on a few extra frills herself in his honor. Bob thought she looked ever so much prettier than at her father's office.

He spent a delightful evening, and left at half-past ten, receiving an invitation to call soon again. He had quite a distance to go to reach his home in Flatbush, and he calculated it would be midnight by the time he reached his own door. Flatbush was not so thickly populated then as it is to-day, and he had a lonesome walk of several blocks after leaving the car. Had he known that he was shadowed that night from his home to 72d street, and that the two men who got off the car at the same time he did were interested in him, he wouldn't have felt so easy in his mind.

The men came on behind him, just as if they were going home themselves, making no effort to conceal their movements. That prevented Bob from suspecting that they entertained any sinister intentions toward him. At a point where some buildings were going up and the street was littered with lumber and general building material, the men made a bluff to pass him. As he stepped aside to give them room they suddenly turned and laid him out with a clip from a club.

If the front of the building had fallen on the boy he could not have lost track of things any quicker and more completely. The men dragged

him down into the cellar of the house, and then one of them went to locate the night watchman. That individual was nodding over a fire he had built of pieces of wood, and did not look very dangerous. The man went up to him and aroused him.

"I'd like to borrow a wheelbarrow to take a drunken friend of mine home," he said. "We—that is, another man and myself—were supporting him along when he collapsed in front of the end house of this row. My name is Smith. I'm cashier of the Brooklyn Bank, and I live at No. 607 — street. I'll send the barrow back in the morning. Here's half a dollar for yourself," the stranger said.

Whether the speaker's words impressed the watchman at all, we cannot say, but the half-dollar did, and he permitted "Smith" to take one of the wheelbarrows on his assurance that he would send it back first thing in the morning. The stranger wheeled the barrow down to the first building, followed by the watchman, who wanted to make sure that it was a man who was to be wheeled off, and not some of the building stuff. When he saw Bob's inert form he seemed satisfied all was right, and then assisted in putting the helpless boy in the wheelbarrow. Smith then raised the handles of the barrow and started off with the vehicle, accompanied by his friend.

CHAPTER IX.—A Case of Ransom.

When Bob recovered his senses, which he did about daylight, he was somewhat at a loss to account for the situation he found himself in. He did not at once remember what had happened to him, nor, in fact, any of the events of the previous evening, and he looked around the bare and cheerless attic he was in, with wonder and perplexity.

"How did I come here?" he asked himself. "This isn't where I live, and I have no recollection of coming to this place."

Gradually his thoughts took connected shape and the events leading up to the moment when he was attacked and struck down became clear to him.

"Those rascals brought me here, and I wonder what their object was in doing it? If their purpose had been simply to rob me, they wouldn't have taken that trouble. They'd have cleaned me out and left me on the spot, to be found by the first passerby. I wonder where I am, anyway? I see it's morning, so I've been unconscious some little time."

Thus soliloquized Bob, looking around the unfinished room. He was lying on an old straw mattress and his hands were tied in front of him, but not so tight as to interfere with the circulation of his blood. He got up, and went to the only window in the place—a small one overlooking a sparsely settled part of the outskirts of Brooklyn. The lower sash was nailed in place, and the upper one, lowered about an inch, was nailed in that position. After viewing the landscape, which looked unfamiliar to him, he went over to the unpainted door. Grabbing the knob with his fingers, he turned it and pulled. The door was locked, or otherwise secured on the outside.

"I'm a prisoner, that's clear," he said to himself.

He noticed that his diamond cuff buttons had been removed, which showed that he had been robbed. To lose Mr. Osgood's present was an unpleasant thought. Of course, what little money he had brought away from the house was gone, too.

"I wonder what else those fellows expect to make out of me?" he asked himself, returning to the mattress and sitting down.

He stared at the planks of the floor as if he expected to find the answer written there.

He heard no sounds about the building, and judged, as it looked early, that his captors were asleep after their nefarious night's work. There was absolutely nothing for him to do except to wait till something happened, and so he waited with the best patience he could. After testing the noose that held his hands together, he was satisfied he could get rid of it in a short time, but concluded it would be better to wait till he found out the object of his imprisonment.

The sun rose and its rays shone on the distant waters of Jamaica Bay. He went to the window again and looked out. When he saw the sun-tipped water he judged that that end of the building was facing the ocean, and he got a sort of general idea of his situation. He stood looking from the window for some time, and finally he heard sounds of footsteps ascending an uncarpeted stairs. Apparently they were approaching that floor. Bob, expecting he would have a visitor, went back to the mattress. The party reached the landing outside, turned the key in the door, and entered the room. He was attired in a plain suit, and his face was hidden by a heavy beard.

"Well, young feller, how do you find yourself?" he said.

"In trouble," replied Bob. "Perhaps you'll explain why I was brought here?"

"You were brought here for reasons."

"I should like to have you state them."

"One of the reasons is that we have an idea you have more money than you need and we'd like to share it with you."

"Who do you mean by 'we'?"

"Well, two or three of us chaps."

"I guess you've got away with all I had about me."

"We found six dollars and a pair of valuable cuff buttons. If you do the right thing you can have the buttons back. I guess they're worth more to you than we could raise on them."

"What do you mean by the right thing?"

"We don't know how much you're worth, but we know you must be worth money, or you would not have an office down in Wall Street."

"How do you know I have an office there?"

"Perhaps we read about it in the papers. You and your partner had a couple of chaps arrested for trying to get into your safe. They wouldn't have taken the risk of getting into your safe unless they thought, or had some evidence, that there was money in it. That money would naturally belong to you and your partner. They didn't get it, but got pinched instead, so the money is safe. There may be \$5,000 in the safe. That ain't much for a person to have who is doing business as a broker."

"Very likely you're worth a good deal more

than that. As we don't know what you are worth we'll call the figure \$5,000. I'll fetch you writing materials and you'll write to your partner, telling him that you've been captured by a few gents who need money badly, and they are holding you for ransom. Tell him we have fixed the price at \$5,000. If he will hand that amount over to us, according to the directions I'll give you, we will let you go. If he refuses and notifies the police, then something unpleasant is likely to happen to you. And it will happen quick, too, for we're not taking any chances."

"So that's your scheme, is it?"

"That's our scheme. What do you think of it?"

"I don't think it will work."

"If you have any feeling for yourself, I advise you to make it work."

"My partner and myself are only boys, and the firm hasn't got \$5,000 in the safe to begin with."

"What are you doing business on, if you haven't got that much?"

"We haven't done any regular business yet."

"How long have you had your office?"

"About three weeks."

"Well, how much can you put up for your freedom?"

"I won't put up a cent."

"I don't expect you to do anything. How much money have you got in your safe? Whatever it is, we'll expect your partner to hand it over in exchange for you."

"My partner won't do anything of the kind."

"Then it will fare kind of hard with you."

"I'll have to take my chances."

"You won't talk so gay when I tell you what will happen to you if you don't induce your partner to come up with the money."

"Do you intend to put me out of the way?"

"We'll put you out of the way, all right, though we don't intend to kill you, or even hurt you. There is more than one way of skinning a cat."

"What do you mean to do with me?"

"If you refuse to write a satisfactory letter to your partner, or if he notifies the police when he gets it, in place of coming up with the money, you'll find yourself out at sea, shipped on a voyage to South Africa, and up against a kind of life you ain't used to and won't like."

"How are you going to get me to sea?"

"Never mind. We'll get you there, all right. It will be too late then for you to hedge. You'd better do what we want. There's three of us in this. We'll let you off for \$1,000 apiece. Your partner can put that up, I guess. You'll get off cheap."

"How much time will you give me to consider your proposition?" asked Bob, who merely wished to gain an opportunity to try and make his escape."

"I'll give you an hour. That's long enough. I'll bring you up something to eat. You'll feel in better humor then to think the matter over."

The man walked out, locked the door after him and Bob heard his steps going downstairs. Fifteen minutes afterward he returned with a companion, bearing an old battered tray on which was spread out a couple of meat sandwiches and a soda-water bottle two-thirds full of cold coffee. Bob's wrists were released and he was told to get busy with the food. The man produced a club and advised him not to make any trouble.

Bob, feeling hungry, ate the sandwiches and drank the coffee. Then his hands were again tied, and the man said they would pay him another visit in an hour.

"I'll bring the writing materials so you can write the letter. Then the matter will be up to your partner. If he has any regard for you, he'll produce the money and secure your release," said the man.

Bob made no reply, and the two men left him alone to think over their demand.

CHAPTER X.—A Big Deal for Big Money.

With the departure of the two men, Bob set his wits to work to try and extricate himself from his tight fix. The first thing was to get his hands loose, and this he accomplished inside of five minutes. Then he examined the door to see how strong it was, and found that it had no apparent weakness. The window was too securely nailed to be available, and even if it were possible for him to have opened it, it was at such a height from the ground that it would have been a poor avenue of escape. Bob felt that he was blocked and he wondered what he should do. He cast his eye around the room for some weapon that he could put up a fight with.

There was nothing in the place, not even a small stick of wood. His eye resting on the wooden partition which separated the front part of the attic from the rear, where he was confined, he thought he saw the outlines of a door there. He went to the spot and found it was a door, without lock or handle. He pushed it and felt it move a little, and heard something rattle on the other side, which struck him as a common latch. He felt for his pocket knife, found it, and opened the large blade. He inserted this in the crack and ran it up. It encountered the latch, raised it and the door opened from him.

"Good!" muttered the boy.

The front attic was as bare as the back part, and the landing door stood ajar. Bob slipped off his shoes and shut the door. Then he looked out of the front window, and found that the building faced upon an unpaved street, practically a road, and that the buildings in the vicinity were much scattered, but in the near distance there were many houses. He opened the window softly and looked down. He saw it was quite impracticable to leave the house that way. The only way was to go downstairs.

"I am liable to run afoul of those rascals," he thought.

That, however, was a risk he had to take. He started down in his stocking feet and reached the floor below. Then he heard voices in conversation on the first floor. Going down the first flight a little way, he discovered that the men were in the front room of the hall, near the door, and that the door of that room was open. It was impossible for him to reach the front door without being seen.

He returned to the second floor and considered how he could get out of his dilemma. The men would be up soon to receive his answer, and the moment they found he was missing from the room there would be something doing. The only thing

he could do was to hide in one of the rooms on that floor and let them pass up, after which he could slip down the stairs and out. He reasoned that after a quick search they would rush down and that he would barely have time to get out into the road before they would be after him.

Well, even so, he guessed they couldn't catch him. Then the idea occurred to him of hiding in the room upstairs, and when they entered the back attic, if he was spry, he could slam the door and lock them in. It was something of a risk, though, and he gave it up. Opening the door of the room nearest to the stairs, Bob walked into it. It was bare of furniture and coated with dust. Here he waited for the men to come up. Half an hour passed before they made a move to do so.

Then he heard their feet on the stairs. Peering through a crack, Bob saw that one of them carried a piece of paper and a fountain pen. In a few minutes they were on the second flight. As soon as they were near the top of it, Bob slipped out of the room and ran down the stairs. The front door was locked, but the key was in it, and it took the boy but a moment to turn it, open the door and step outside. Then he pulled on his shoes and before starting he took the key and locked the door on the outside.

"That'll stop them long enough to give me a start," he thought.

He left the house and hurried up the road at a fast trot. He looked behind him frequently, but saw no sign of the men in pursuit. He passed the nearest house, which was inhabited, and eased down. Down a cross street or road came an empty wagon.

"Will you give me a lift?" he asked the driver.

"Sure! Get up," said the man pleasantly.

"What part of Brooklyn am I in?" asked Bob.

"Why, don't you know?" asked the driver.

"No. I was brought out here last night, unconscious, by a couple of crooks, and I've just escaped from them."

"Is that so?" said the man, much astonished.

Bob related his experiences and the driver agreed that he had been up against it hard.

"You're in an unsettled part of Flatbush, over toward Jamaica Bay. Where do you live?"

Bob told him.

"I'm going near there," said the driver.

"Glad to hear it. I want to go home before I go to New York. Do you know the time?"

The man had a cheap watch and told him it was nine o'clock. In due time the driver set him down at the corner nearest his home and, thanking the man for the ride, he hurried to his house. He found his mother somewhat anxious over his failure to return home the night before, which fact she had not discovered till his sister called him to breakfast. His appearance showed that he had been through some kind of a mill. His new suit would have to be taken to a cleaner's to be put in shape again. He told his mother what he had been through, and the recital gave her much concern.

She got him his breakfast while he was changing his apparel for his business attire, and when he came downstairs he looked himself again. Leaving the house, he took a car for the bridge, but got off in the business section to report his night's experience at police headquarters. He

gave his loss as \$6 in money and a pair of cuff buttons worth about \$100. Then he went on to his office, where he arrived close to one. Will was in and wondering where he had been. He told his story to his partner.

"My, you had a hard time of it! You must look out for yourself after this or those fellows might lay for you and get you again," said Will.

"When I go out of an evening again and expect to get back late, I'll carry a gun. I don't propose to be caught napping a second time. How is D. & L. to-day?"

"It's up half a point."

"That's something," said Bob, picking up a Wall Street paper and starting to read it.

Nothing of importance happened that day, and the boys went home at their usual time. Next day D. & L. went up half a point and then came to a stop for two days. During the following three days it advanced an eighth each day. After consulting Will, Bob sent word to Mr. Osgood to sell the shares, which he did at once and the firm cleared about \$1,000.

A few days afterward Bob found out that a syndicate had been formed to corner M. & O. shares. He investigated the facts to the best of his ability and feeling sure that the syndicate was a fact, he called on Broker Osgood with \$25,000 in his pocket.

"I've got another order for you, Mr. Osgood," he said, as he took his seat.

"I'm ready to handle it for you, Bartling," replied the broker, with a smile.

"It's bigger than the other, but before I tell you I've a bit of news for you."

Thereupon the boy told him of the unpleasant adventure he had met with after leaving the Osgood home on the previous Thursday night, and how he had been robbed of the cuff buttons which he valued so highly, owing to the circumstances under which he had received them. Mr. Osgood tendered his sympathy and said it was a pity he lost the buttons.

"I may possibly recover them if the rascals pawn them, but that is only a chance," said Bob. "Well, about this deal. I want you to buy us 5,000 shares of M. & O."

"Five thousand!" ejaculated the broker.

"Yes—on margin. Here's \$25,000 deposit. You will have to raise over \$400,000 to swing the deal for us, so the interest will amount to something, even though the deal has a short run."

"I should say so. This is a mighty big order, young man. Do you think you are doing the right thing to embark so heavily in the market?"

"If we didn't have some good ground for figuring on a rise, we wouldn't make the deal," said Bob.

"Is this another tip you've been favored with?"

"It is; but that's between you and us, Mr. Osgood. After you put our order through you won't make any mistake getting in on it yourself."

"I don't speculate as a rule. It isn't good policy for a broker who is running a conservative business."

"I agree with you; but I'll guarantee that the chances will run in your favor."

The broker booked the order and turned it over, with the money, to his cashier.

"You boys are certainly phenomenal speculators for your age. If you keep on at this rate I'm afraid you'll meet with your Waterloo."

Bob laughed.

"Where persons monkey with a two-edged sword there is always danger of getting cut, and the stock market certainly cuts both ways," he said. "But, you see, Will and I are out after a golden stake, and we want to win it as soon as possible."

"What do you call a golden stake?"

"A million, more or less."

"I hope you won't lose your heads in your eagerness to secure this prize. Remember, there is an old saying, 'He whom the gods would destroy they first make mad.' There is a good deal of truth in that. When people lose their heads after anything, it is the beginning of their finish."

"I think there is good method in our madness, Mr. Osgood. I have got it pretty straight that there is a syndicate behind M. & O. That means there will be something doing in the stock. It is selling pretty low at present, and therefore it is a fair risk, for it is hardly likely to go much lower. The market is off now, and that's a good time to buy if you have money lying idle, like we have. Syndicate or no syndicate, M. & O. is not going to stay around 92 very long, you can take that from me. Isn't that sound reasoning?"

Mr. Osgood admitted that it was, but added that one never can tell just how the cat will jump in Wall Street.

"I've known the best-laid schemes, founded on accurate judgment, miss fire from one cause or another," said the broker. "I will remind you of another pithy saying which is, 'Never put your trust in kings.' For the same reason, it does not pay to trust to the best tip in the world, sometimes."

Bob had to admit that the broker was right, then he got up and took his leave.

CHAPTER XI.—Mr. Tooley and the Bait Bob Wouldn't Nibble At.

During the next ten days the boys were kept pretty busy watching their stock. They had a big amount of money at stake, and though they felt reasonably confident of winning out, the uncertainties of Wall Street kept them on the anxious seat, even after the price had begun to go up toward par. If the stock had not been really unusually low when Bob got the tip, he never would have been in favor of taking such a big risk. However, things began coming their way, and on the tenth day it reached par. Then Bob proposed that they take a fall out of J. Higgins, Esq.

"The market is strong and is steadily rising," he said. "Take \$5,000 and go up to the bucketshop and put it up on M. & O. He won't be able to work any wash sale on us or anybody else the way things are going."

"I don't believe Higgins will accept the order," replied Will. "You know he was always leary on a rising market, and always fought shy of any big deals."

"Try him," said Bob.

So Will called at the bucketshop and went to the margin clerk's window.

"Hello, Jenson," he said.

"Why, hello, Goode! How are things?"

"Fine as silk! I want to buy some M. & O."

"The dickens you do!" cried Jenson, in surprise.

"Yes. I want 500 shares on margin."

"Five hundred shares! Have you got to be an operator?"

"Will you take the order for the account of Bartling & Goode?"

"I don't know. All large orders have to be submitted to the boss."

"Show it to him."

"He's in Philadelphia. Went there to confer with the manager. You know we have three offices in the combine, and the Philadelphia house met with a loss lately, that's why Mr. Higgins went on there."

"Show it to Miss Taggart, then. She runs the shop when he's away."

"That is what I was going to do."

Jenson went to see the confidential stenographer. In a few minutes he returned.

"Miss Taggart wishes to see you in the office," he said.

Will was shown in there.

"Is this a genuine order, Mr. Goode?" she asked.

"It is. Here is \$5,000 to prove it."

"How came you to come here?"

"My partner told me to call and make the deal, if I could."

"You mean Mr. Bartling?"

"Yes."

"I wouldn't like to see you lose that money."

"Do you think the price is likely to drop?"

"The market says no; but the market is not to be depended on."

"You don't talk that way to the general run of your customers unless you don't want to take in the deal."

"I am talking this way chiefly in the interests of Mr. Bartling, who rendered me a great service, which I haven't forgotten," said Miss Taggart. "If you insist on making the deal, I will accept it; but I had rather not."

"I insist on nothing, Miss Taggart," said Will. "I simply tell you I am acting under instructions from my partner. If he's willing to take the risk, all he will expect from you is a square deal."

"Tell him for me he shall have it; but I cannot say that I approve of the risk. If the price falls, he will lose."

"And so will I, for we are making this deal as a firm."

Miss Taggart took the order and Will went back to the office to report.

"I didn't think you'd put it through," said Bob. "I don't believe J. Higgins, Esq., would have accepted it. Miss Taggart is friendly toward me now, and she really thinks M. & O. is not likely to go higher. I think we will soak that bucketshop for enough to give J. Higgins, Esq., a fit when he gets back."

Two days later M. & O. took on a boom and rushed up to 112 3-8.

"Will, I'm going to sell out. There is \$100,000 profit in sight for us. You run around to the Mutual Brokerage and Investment Co. and close out our contract with that shop. We will soak that establishment \$6,000. I am only sorry it isn't several times as much."

Will departed on his errand, and Bob hurried around to Osgood's office and ordered the firm's

5,000 shares sold at once. Mr. Higgins had not yet got back from Philadelphia, so Will did not see him, and he was just as well pleased. Jenson closed the order and congratulated Will on his success in copping some of the bucketshop's dollars, but he was careful to speak in a very low tone. Miss Taggert signed the check next day without a word, and sent it to Bartling & Goode. About the same time Bob got Osgood's check for \$125,000. Bob cashed the check of the Mutual Brokerage and Investment Co. through Mr. Osgood, telling that gentleman how they had got back at the bucketshop to the tune of \$6,000.

"Good!" said the broker. "You ought to have a bunch of money now, for you won \$100,000 through me."

"The firm is worth \$140,000 cash."

"I should think you'd call that a very fair golden stake."

"It is. We ought to make a million with that."

The broker shook his head.

"If you take my advice, you won't take any more big risks. It is easier to lose money than to make it. You boys have enjoyed phenomenal luck, but you can't foresee when your luck will desert you. It isn't natural for you to keep on winning. You have capital enough now to devote your energies to building up a business. It will be slow work, on account of your youth and inexperience, but you can afford to take the time as long as you hang on to your money."

Broker Osgood couldn't keep the knowledge of the young firm's great success in the market to himself. He told a particular friend how the boys had won \$100,000 on the rise in M. & O. That gentleman repeated the news to several of his acquaintances, who in turn circulated the information with the result that all Wall Street heard about the astonishing success of the young firm. This created considerable interest in them, and many brokers were anxious to make their acquaintance. A broker named Tooley, who had a lot of watered railroad stock he was trying to work off his hands, called on the young firm and found Bob in.

"Am I addressing Mr. Bartling or Mr. Goode?" he asked.

"My name is Bartling," returned Bob.

"Mine is Lawrence Toole, and I'm glad to make your acquaintance. The boys are talking about you young fellows ever since you made a hundred thousand in M. & O."

"Why, who gave out the information that we made that?" asked Bob, who felt it must have been Mr. Osgood.

"Really, I couldn't say. I heard it from a broker named Jackson, and also from two or three others. It is all around the Street," said Tooley.

"You mustn't place any dependence on rumors," said Bob.

"I know; but this is true, isn't it?"

"I must decline to affirm or deny the story."

"It must be true, then, if you won't deny it. You young fellows are decidedly fortunate. You are on the road to make a fortune. What you want to do now is to get in on South Meriden. I can sell you some at the market price. In a month it will be ten points higher."

Bob had read considerable about South Meriden, and he wouldn't touch it with a ten-foot pole.

"That's the road which was gobbled by the Atlas Securities Co.," he said.

"Yes. That corporation purchased it outright and made a gold mine out of it."

"Yes," answered Bob dryly. "The big moguls composing the Securities Co. got possession of the road by the squeeze game."

"Squeeze game! Nonsense! The Securities Co. paid \$75,000,000 for it."

"I believe that was the price, but the owners of the road didn't want to sell their holdings. They were told if they didn't sell the road would be discredited on the Stock Exchange, which would cause a drop in its standing and value, so that the stock would become a kind of dead issue. As the big moguls were in a position to bring about all they intimated, the owners of the road felt obliged to submit to the robbery. That's what I call a squeeze game."

"You've got a wrong impression of the matter," said Tooley. "The owners were glad to get the stock off their hands, for they were not making dividends. Now look at the stock since the Securities Co. took hold of the road. It's selling ten per cent. higher, and will continue to advance right along. That's why I suggest it as a fine investment for you."

"Do you mean to tell me that stock is a good investment?" asked Bob.

"Certainly it is. None better."

"Has the Securities Co. extended the road?"

"No; but they've developed it."

"Bought more rolling stock and other property, you mean?"

"Probably they have. What I mean is the Securities Co. has raised the standing of the road in the market."

"Look here, Mr. Tooley, the Securities Co. added \$75,000,000 more stock to the road's capitalization. A good deal of that stock has been unloaded on the public and the rest is for sale at the ten per cent. advance you mentioned. As the road isn't worth a cent more, actually, than it was before the new company took possession of it, why, it stands to reason that the new issue of stock is pure water, without any value behind it."

"Where did you learn all this?"

"The story has been told in the papers, and I make it my business to read everything I see concerning Wall Street operations. This firm wouldn't put a dollar into that stock. When the Securities Co. has got rid of all that new stock, there is going to be a slump in its price, and the public who bought it will lose money. That is one way the people are swindled in Wall Street."

"Young man, you mustn't believe all you see in the papers. If you do, you'll lose many golden opportunities to make money."

"I don't believe all I see in the papers. I use my judgment, and my judgment indicates that South Meriden is not a good investment."

"Then you don't care to buy any of it?" said Tooley, clearly disappointed.

"No, sir; not a dollar's worth."

"You're foolish."

"That's where we differ in opinion."

Mr. Tooley suddenly remembered he had a particular engagement he had to keep, and, saying good-by, took his leave. Bob took up his paper and went on reading.

CHAPTER XII.—Bob and Will Capture Miss Taggart.

Bob was sitting in his office one morning when Will entered with a plainly dressed lady of perhaps forty, and a girl of seventeen.

"Bob, let me introduce you to Mrs. Woods and her daughter," said Will.

"Pleased to make your acquaintance, ladies. Sit down," said Bob, offering them chairs.

"I met Mrs. Woods and Miss Woods coming out of the Mutual Brokerage and Investment Co. They appeared to be in trouble, and, suspecting them to be the latest victims of that skin shop, I took the liberty of asking them what was the matter. Mrs. Woods told me that she had been induced to go to Higgins' place by a woman acquaintance, who I believe to be a capper for the bucketshop, and invest the proceeds of a small legacy in some stock which she was assured would bring her large returns. She put her money up on margin, but the price of the stock went down and her account was closed out. I brought them to our office to look into this matter. I want to see if Mrs. Woods lost her money legitimately or whether she is the victim of the bucketshop wash-sale trickery. Here is her memorandum slip, which shows that she bought 200 shares of Kentucky Central at 65. Here is the statement rendered her, which shows she was closed out at 54 7-8, leaving her slightly in debt to Higgins et al."

Bob looked at the statement and noted that the stock had been sold two days before. He consulted the Stock Exchange record for that day, and it showed that Kentucky Central had opened at 57 1-8 and closed at 58 3-8. The lowest quotation during the day was 54 7-8 for 200 shares, but it followed a quotation of 55 7-8 and preceded one of 56. It bore all the marks of a wash sale, engineered to get the quotation on record. As the transaction was for 200 shares, the number Mrs. Woods had bought, there seemed no doubt about the character of the sale. Bob called Will over and pointed out the facts.

"I knew it was one of Higgins' swindles," said Will. "Can't something be done to show him up and make him return this lady her money?"

"I'm afraid not," replied Bob. "It will be impossible to secure evidence showing collusion between J. Higgins, Esq., and the brokers who conducted the deal, or between the brokers themselves, if they could be identified."

"But it is ridiculous that the broker who made the sale should accept a full point below the previous quotation when most of the deals show they were made at a difference of only one-eighth."

"Perhaps so; but the broker, if called to account for doing so, could give ample reason, or even lay it to a mistake on his part."

"Then this steal has got to go?"

"I'm afraid so, but I'll get all the facts of the case from the lady and then call and see Mr. J. Higgins, Esq., if he will grant me an interview, which is somewhat doubtful."

Bob questioned the lady, and then, with the records of the day's transactions of the Stock Exchange in his pocket, he started for the bucketshop, leaving Will to entertain Mrs. Woods and her daughter. When Bob entered the office of

the Mutual Brokerage and Investment Co. he asked the office boy if he could see Higgins.

"He's busy just now and can't be seen. Take a seat," said the youth.

Instead of taking a seat, Bob went up to the margin clerk's window.

"Hello, Jenson!" he said.

"Hello, Bartling! Glad to see you. I hope you haven't come to make another deal, because if you have it's no go."

"No, I didn't come for that purpose, but why couldn't I make another deal? Did the one my partner make in O. & M. make J. Higgins, Esq., sick?"

"Sick! He went wild over it. He's done nothing but scrap with Miss Taggart ever since. He told her she had no business to accept such a deal on a rising market, and particularly from you boys. She's in his room now, and they're having it hot and heavy over something else. He's acted like a crazy man since he came back."

"Six thousand dollars isn't much of a loss," laughed Bob. "I wish I had stuck him for double that."

"To tell you the truth, I don't see how Miss Taggart came to accept the deal," said Jenson. "It wasn't like her to do it. She's as much the brains of this office as Higgins is. He's a fool to fight with her. Suppose she left him in a huff, she could make things awfully hot for him if she wanted to. There isn't a secret she isn't up in. I'll bet she could put the whole combine on the hog."

"I hope she gets mad and leaves, then," said Bob. "I came around to see Higgins, Esq., about a little skin game he pulled off on a certain party whose acquaintance the firm has made."

"What good will it do you to see him? Do you expect you can force him to do anything? You ought to know better."

"I intend to see him, if I can."

"You know what effect a red flag has on a mad bull, don't you? That's what would happen if you sent your name in to him. He'd order you out of the office."

"All right; we'll see."

At that moment Miss Taggart came out of the private room looking as mad as a hornet. She went direct to her den. Bob turned to the office boy.

"Here's my card. Take it in to J. Higgins, Esq., and tell him Mr. Bartling would like the honor of an interview."

The boy went in. He came out in a hurry.

"He won't see you. He says he wants nothing to do with you," said the youth.

"All right. Go back and tell him if he isn't at my office inside of an hour there'll be something doing he won't like," said Bob.

"I wouldn't dare give him that message," said the lad.

"All right, sonny. Will you take my name to Miss Taggart?"

"Yes."

The boy went into the counting room and presently returned and handed Bob a folded slip of paper. Bob opened it and read the following:

"Mr. Bartling:

"Go into the corridor. I will meet you there presently.
A. TAGGERT."

Bob went out into the corridor, and a few minutes later he was joined by Miss Taggart, who had her hat on and a handbag in her hand.

"I'll hear what you have to say, Mr. Bartling," she said.

"My business was with J. Higgins, Esq., but he wouldn't see me," began Bob.

"I am not surprised," she said, with a peculiar half smile, "but I can't help you. I have severed my connection with the office."

"You have!" cried Bob. "Fine and dandy! Will you accompany me to our office?"

Miss Taggart said she would, and on the way Bob told her why he had called at the bucketshop.

"Mrs. Woods is a widow, and it is a shame she should be robbed of the little money she received from the estate of her late sister," said Bob.

"She should not have brought her money to Wall Street," said Miss Taggart.

"That's right, but people are doing foolish things every day. She was induced to come by an acquaintance named Mrs. Wagner. Isn't that the lady employed by J. Higgins, Esq., to drum up business?"

"She is," admitted Miss Taggart.

"Can't you suggest some way by which I can force J. Higgins, Esq., to disgorge?"

"Yes, if you wish me to. I am through with Mr. Higgins, and I don't care if I put him out of business. He has said things to me that I won't stand from any man, and I intend to show him that I'm his master."

"Miss Taggart, if you want any help, join hands with Bartling & Goode. We would like nothing better than to break up that bucketshop combine. We have the money to help along the good cause."

"Money! It would take \$100,000, perhaps more."

"We have \$140,000 cash at this moment."

"You have!" exclaimed Miss Taggart, in astonishment.

"We have. If you will stand in with us, I'll prove it to you."

"Prove it to me, and I'll stand in with you."

"It's a bargain. Come with me to the safe deposit vault and I'll show you the money."

"How could you have made so much?"

"I will explain that to you at our office."

Bob took Miss Taggart to the vault, got access to his box and handed Miss Taggart several bunches of large bills to count. They footed up \$137,000.

"We have \$3,000 more in the safe at the office," he said.

"If you wish my aid to break up that combine, it is yours," she said.

"Good! Make our office your headquarters. We are beginning to get a little out-of-town trade. I think with your help we can build up a business. If you are willing to consider a proposition to work for us and push our business, I'll make you one. It will include an interest in all business we do hereafter."

"I will talk the matter over with you," said Miss Taggart.

Great was Will's surprise when Bob walked in with Miss Taggart.

"Miss Taggart has left J. Higgins, Esq., and will help us force the bucketshop to do the right thing by Mrs. Woods," said Bob.

Will felt like executing an Indian war dance. The case was immediately gone into, and Miss Taggart furnished the young partners with certain evidence which would carry consternation into the bucketshop camp. Bob then turned to Mrs. Woods and told her to leave her address and she would hear from the firm, which would use its best endeavors to get her money back.

"But we are doing this on the condition that you promise to keep away from Wall Street hereafter, madam," said Bob.

"I promise," replied the widow. "I shall be only too glad to stay away if I get even half my money back."

Will, who seemed taken with Miss Woods, escorted the ladies to the elevator and put them in a down cage. Then he returned, and the two boys had a long and earnest talk with Miss Taggart. She accepted an offer of \$30 a week, and a certain interest in the legitimate profits of the firm as business came to the boys. Bob even hinted at giving her a regular partnership in the firm, for he felt that with Miss Taggart at their back they would rise in importance as Wall Street brokers. She had the brokerage business down to a fine point and could manage an office about as good as any man in Wall Street.

Miss Taggart went home after assuring the boys that she would be on hand next morning at ten o'clock to begin business on the lines agreed upon. As soon as she was gone, Bob wrote a note to Mr. Higgins, which he had the stenographer in the next office typewrite for him on his office paper. He handed it to Will and told him to take it to an A. D. T. messenger office and have it delivered at once.

"I'll bet he'll come here when he reads that," said Bob, "and then we'll turn the screws on him."

CHAPTER XIII.—J. Higgins, Esq., Takes Water.

Will came back after dispatching the letter, and the boys were talking together when James Higgins came into the office, looking pretty ugly.

"How do you do, Mr. Higgins!" said Bob. "Be seated."

"I'd like to know what you mean by writing me that impertinent and threatening letter?" belittled the bucketshop man.

"Sit down and you shall have a full explanation. As you noticed by my letter, the case refers to a piece of your customary sharp practice which you pulled off on a Mrs. Wm. Woods, a late customer of yours. The lady has appealed to us to take the matter up, and we have done so."

"What have I to do with Mrs. Woods? She only traded with me once," said Higgins. "If her deal went wrong, that's her own lookout. She's got no redress, and you and your partner are a pair of fools to interest yourself in her affairs."

"Mr. Higgins, we worked long enough for you to get an insight into your methods. I have already told you what I think of them. Now, with respect to this case of Mrs. Woods, let me read you two or three of the quotations from Monday's daily market record of the Stock Exchange."

"I don't want to hear them!" roared Higgins.

"I'm not surprised; but you'll have to listen to me," said Bob, who then read off the following quotations of Kentucky Central: 1,000, 55 7-8; then 200, 54 7-8; then 600, 56.

"The 200 represents Mrs. Woods' shares. Will you explain why that stock was sold at such a figure, when the preceding one was a point higher?" said Bob.

"You have a nerve to question my business methods!" cried Higgins. "My broker was instructed to sell the stock, and I suppose he got the best price he could."

"Then you won't admit that was a wash sale, made on purpose to wipe out the little leeway Mrs. Woods still had on her stock?"

"I'll not listen to your abuse any longer. I'm sorry I came here," said Mr. Higgins, jumping up.

"Sit down, Mr. Higgins. We have got you here and you don't leave this office till this matter is adjusted."

"I'll adjust nothing!"

"I think you will when I tell you that I have the names of the two brokers who made the sale."

"You have!" gasped Higgins.

"Yes, and if you refuse to come to time, I shall submit a complaint to the Board of Governors of the Exchange against those gentlemen, and have them cited before a meeting to explain the nature of the deal."

"Pooh! What good would that do? You have no evidence."

"Haven't we? We have all the evidence we need."

"Where did you get it?" sneered Higgins.

"From Miss Taggart."

"I don't believe it."

At that moment there came a knock on the door.

"Here's Miss Taggart now," said Bob, to further startle him.

Mr. Higgins didn't want to see his late confidential assistant, and, seeing the door of a closet ajar, he rushed into it. Will opened the door and found the janitor there. The man stated his errand and went away.

"Let's barricade Higgins in the closet till he surrenders," whispered Will.

Bob fell in with the idea, and the two boys, seizing the flat-top desk, shoved it against the closet door. Higgins, finding that he had been secured by a false alarm, started to leave the closet, and found his escape blocked.

"Let me out! Let me out!" roared Higgins, pushing against the desk with all his might.

"Not much," replied Bob resolutely. "You'll stay in that closet till you agree to our terms."

Just then Broker Osgood walked into the office.

"Hello!" exclaimed the visitor, viewing affairs with surprise. "What's up here?"

"We've caught a bucketshop shark and we're going to make him settle with a client of ours whom he has swindled," answered Bob.

"Let him out and I'll see fair play," said Osgood.

The boys let Higgins out and made him sit down again. The case was stated for the broker's benefit, and Bob said he had evidence that implicated two members of the Exchange of unfair practices in collusion with the bucketshop man. Bob wrote two names on a piece of paper and handed it to Higgins.

"Those are the brokers. Settle up or we shall proceed against them," he said.

"What do you want me to do?" asked Higgins, surrendering.

"First, I want you to admit right now that the sale of Mrs. Woods' stock was not a bona-fide one. Remember, I can prove it wasn't without your testimony."

Higgins made the admission.

"Very good. Then Mrs. Woods' stock was not sold on Monday. As the price has not since gone below her marginal reserve, she still owns it. The stock closed this afternoon at the very price she paid for it and a fraction over. Acting under her instructions, I order you now to sell it. And as you are a slippery individual you will give me a check in advance to her order for two thousand dollars."

After some hesitation, Higgins took out his pocket checkbook and made out the check.

"Mrs. Woods won't be able to collect this till to-morrow. If you notify your bank to stop it, I'll call on your two brokers and tell them a few things that will bring them around to your office in a hurry."

"I won't stop it," said Higgins, in a surly tone.

"See that you don't. That is all, Mr. J. Higgins. You can go now," said Bob, and Higgins went, in double-quick time.

Bob explained to Mr. Osgood the whole case of Mrs. Woods.

"It's only a type of hundreds of others," said the broker. "If people will go to bucketshops, they must expect to be singed in their pocket-books."

Next morning Miss Taggart appeared and took up business with the young firm. She explained the best way to make a bid for custom, commending the advertising plan of the boys as a good method.

CHAPTER XIV.—Planning for the Bucketshop.

Two weeks passed and things began to take shape under Miss Taggart's management. The boy firm got a number of customers, and Bob made an arrangement with Broker Osgood, on a half-commission basis, to act for them at the Exchange. Mr. Higgins made a strong effort to get Miss Taggart to go back into his office. He visited her at her home, but she positively refused to hold any communication with him. Had he known that she had gone in with Bartling & Goode, he would have been still more disturbed, for he knew the boys were down on him. It was about this time that Bob secured positive information of a coming rise in A. & P. stock. He talked the tip over with Miss Taggart and told her he and Will intended to get in on it.

"This might be a good chance for you to catch Mr. Higgins," she replied.

"If you can point out the way, Miss Taggart, we'll take a hand. We'd sooner put J. Higgins, Esq., on the fritz than make a bunch of money; but we ought to make money doing it, if we are successful," said Bob.

Miss Taggart said that she knew how a fake tip, indicating that a bear combine was about to jump on A. & P. and bring about a slump in price, could be sent to Mr. Higgins from the same source he received all his pointers.

"When he gets that tip he will lay his plans to profit by it," she said. "He will have his capers go about among the customers who frequent the office and suggest to them to buy A. & P. That is one of his more successful schemes for making money—putting his customers up to operate on the wrong side of the market. In this instance he will be inviting a considerable loss on himself, which it will be impossible for him to avert by any efforts of his brokers at the Exchange. That will be the first spoke in his wheel."

"Good!" said Bob.

"Now, I think I can manage to get a certain party in his confidence, and who is a good friend of mine, to visit him, bring up the subject of your financial standing, and suggest to him a way to get at you. He will listen, you may depend on it. The plan I have in mind will be for him to send you what he thinks will be a fake tip—namely, that A. & P. is going to be boomed. He will do this through one of the clerks you are friendly with, who will be bribed to put the thing through. This clerk will make certain suggestions to you by which Higgins will hope to rope you into his clutches. Just what plan he will adopt, if the scheme takes shape, I cannot say, but it will be something intended to induce you to go long on A. & P. Knowing that the stock really is going to advance, you will fall into the supposed trap, and the deeper you get Higgins involved, the surer you will be to break up the business of the combine," said Miss Taggart.

"Fine!" ejaculated Bob. "If it will work."

Two days afterward, Jenson, Higgins' margin clerk, called at the boys' office at noontime and told Bob he had just learned that A. & P. shares were going to boom, and suggested that Bob come over to the bucketshop and buy an option off his boss and thus get the bucketshop in a hole. Bob grinned at his words.

"I'm much obliged for the pointer, Jenson, but if I went over to your office and asked to see J. Higgins, Esq., he'd have me fired out," he said.

"Don't you believe it. He's just got word that there's going to be a slump in A. & P. and he's circulating the news among his customers of a rise so as to catch their little bank rolls. If you send word to him that you'd like to buy an option on A. & P., he'd jump at the chance to get square with you for the six thousand you got away from him a while ago. See the point?"

"Yes; and I've a good mind to chance it," said Bob.

"Do it. You won't regret it," said Jenson eagerly.

Bob smothered another grin and said he'd speak to his partner on the subject. After some further talk on the matter, Jenson took his leave. Miss Taggart came in soon afterward and Bob told her about Jenson's visit and its purport.

"Mr. Higgins has fallen into the trap," she said, with a shrewd smile. "Now, all you have to do is to call on him and offer to buy an option for a considerable amount of A. & P. and then you'll have the combine by the heels. The fall of the New York office will bring down the two branches, though the fall of either of the branches would ruin the New York office. A. & P. is selling at what to-day?"

"Eighty-two."

"Higgins will, of course, insist on an advance on that price for a ten-day delivery. It would look suspicious if he didn't, no matter how eager he might be to sell you the option. You will be able to make it for about 84, though he will ask more than that at first. Go on now and see what you can do with him."

Bob put on his hat and started for the bucketshop.

"Is Mr. J. Higgins in?" he asked the office boy.

"Yes," replied the youth. "Want to see him?"

"I wouldn't have asked for him, sonny, if I didn't. Take my card in and please inform your boss that my business is to do something in A. & P. with him."

In a few minutes the boy returned and said that Higgins would see him.

"You have a great nerve coming around here, Bartling, after the way you and your partner treated me in your office the other day," said Higgins gruffly.

"We were simply acting in the interests of a client, Mr. Higgins. You would have done the same had the case been reversed."

"Well, what do you want?"

"I have an idea that A. & P. is going to advance. I'd like to buy an option from you on that stock. What will you ask for a ten-day call on 1,000 or 5,000 shares?"

"What will I ask?" replied the bucketshop man, hugging the delusion to his soul that the boy firm was falling into his clutches. "I'll sell you as many shares as you want for 85."

"I don't think you will, Mr. Higgins. That's too high. I can go out and buy it now for 82."

"Do you mean to say you will be able to pay for 5,000 shares of A. & P. ten days hence? They would cost you over \$400,000. Are you and your partner so well fixed, financially?"

"We have means of raising all the money we need to meet any obligation we may make," said Bob.

"What will you give for a 5,000 option?"

"We'll give you 84, and we will deposit five per cent. of the current value as a forfeit."

Higgins made some figures on a pad.

"The current value of 5,000 shares is \$410,000. I want a larger deposit."

"All right. Make out your option. Here is the money. Give me a receipt for it. If the deal goes our way, as I look to see it do, it will stand as a part payment on the sum due. If the deal goes against us, and we should let the option go by default, you will make the \$30,000," said Bob.

Higgins, with an inward chuckle, counted the money and put the deal through. Perhaps Bob chuckled, too, as he departed with the option in his pocket, for he felt confident he had the bucketshop combine in his grip at last.

CHAPTER XV.—Breaking Up a Bucketshop Combine.

"There's J. Higgins, Esq.'s option for 5,000 shares of A. & P. at 84," said Bob, handing it to Miss Taggart when he got back to the office.

"You have done well. Unless the unexpected happens, Mr. Higgins is likely to find himself in a financial hole in ten days," said the lady, put-

ting the option in an envelope and placing it in the safe.

"We have \$110,000 cash on hand. I propose to buy 5,000 more shares of A. & P. at the present market," said Bob.

Miss Taggert nodded approvingly.

"You ought to make a good thing out of your tip," she said.

"That is what the firm expects," replied the boy.

He called upon Broker Osgood and left the order. After it had been put through, he told the trader that the firm was operating on another winning tip. Then he told him how he had hooked the bucketshop man for a 5,000 ten-day option.

"How in thunder did you do it?" asked Osgood, in surprise.

"We possess an underground route as well as J. Higgins, Esq.," smiled Bob.

"An underground route! What do you mean?"

"That is one of our business secrets, Mr. Osgood."

"Well, I don't want to pry into your business affairs, of course, but I never heard any one in the brokerage business refer to such a thing in the sense I gather from your remark."

On the following day A. & P. began to go down a little, and Higgins shook hands with himself when he noted the fact.

"I'll squeeze those young chaps, and get revenge for their insults!" he muttered, with an ugly look on his face. "They'll never take the option up when it gets ten points or more below the price the option calls for, and I shall add their \$30,000 to my bank account. Oh, I've got a great head!"

A. & P. went down to 79, and then recovered and began to rise. Higgins didn't like that, but judged it was only a temporary fluctuation. Five days' time of the option had expired and A. & P. was still selling at 81. Bob met Higgins on the street.

"Things are not going very fast our way," said Bob, "but we look to see them come out all right inside of the next five days."

Higgins grinned.

"You made the deal, so if you slip up on it, don't come around and blame me," he said.

"Certainly not. If we don't call on you for the stock by the tenth day at three o'clock, the forfeit is yours."

That afternoon A. & P. jumped to 84. Next day it went to 88. Higgins had a fit and went around to see the man he supposed had sent him the tip that the stock was going to slump.

"I never sent you such information," said the broker.

"You didn't!" roared Higgins. "Why, I've got it on your office paper."

"Is my signature to it?"

"No. You never signed any paper you sent me."

"Of course I didn't. I'm no fool; but anything you got from me was the goods. You could depend on me. That information, however, didn't come from me, for I didn't hear about any slump that was on the cards in relation to A. & P., or any other stock. Somebody has fooled you. If you've used the information, you'd better hedge

quick, for take it from me, A. & P. is going up instead of down."

Higgins went away like a wild man. He began to see that he might be on the ragged edge. He had agreed to deliver 5,000 shares of A. & P. at 84, and the price was 88 now. As it wasn't his business policy to buy stocks, but only to gamble in the market price, he had missed his chance in this case. When A. & P. went down to 79 and then began to rise, it was his cue to buy 5,000 shares to cover his option, then he would have stood to have made about \$25,000 on the deal, and would have escaped from the trap Bob set for him. Now he stood to lose \$20,000 anyway, and if he didn't buy, there was no telling how much he would be stuck for.

The very idea of losing \$20,000 to the boy firm made him half frantic. The option still had three days to run, and he clung to the hope that during that time the price would break. It didn't, but kept getting higher till it registered at 95. Half, if not more, of his customers had bought A. & P. and were holding on for the highest price. If they all cashed in on him now he stood to lose \$100,000, besides \$55,000 to Bartling & Goode. That would mean ruin to him and his combine. On the morning of the tenth day Bob sent Will around to Higgins to give him notice that the option would be called that afternoon.

"Ask him if he will deliver the stock or settle the difference in cash. Tell him it's all the same to us," said Bob.

In the meantime Bob went out and ordered Osgood to work off the firm's 5,000 shares at the market. He figured out a profit of \$65,000 coming their way. Will returned with word that Higgins was reported out, and that his customers were cashing in on A. & P.

"Look out," said Miss Taggert, "you may lose your \$55,000 profit and your \$30,000 deposit on top of it. Go out and sell the option at the best figure you can get for it."

She gave Bob the names of several brokers who were friendly to Higgins and who might buy it in. Bob got a hustle on and succeeded in selling the option to one of the bunch for 92, which would give the firm a profit of \$40,000. The check he received carried with it the \$30,000 deposit.

As soon as he got it, Bob rushed around to the broker's bank and had it certified. As soon as that was done, he felt safe. Altogether the firm made \$105,000 on A. & P. Next day the papers reported the collapse of the Mutual Brokerage & Investment Co., and the flight of James Higgins, the head of the concern, with all the cash he could save out of the wreck, leaving numerous creditors, including the broker who had bought his option in the lurch.

On the first of May, Bartling & Goode moved into a handsome suite of offices in a Wall Street building, and from that time, with a capital of a quarter of a million, their upward career was rapid and successful.

Next week's issue will contain "BOUND TO BE A MANAGER; or, MAKING MONEY IN BASEBALL."

CURRENT NEWS

MUSKRATS DESTROY DAMS.

Muskrats digging a hole in a dam erected in 1801-1802 have forced the Seeber & Chap grist-mill at Adams, N. Y., to close. The dam had withstood the ravages of time, but succumbed to the attacks of the rats. The dam was built by Daniel Smith for a grist-mill which superseded the stump mortars of the earliest settlers at Adams, which was then known as Smith Mills.

THE NAVAL ACADEMY.

The students of the Annapolis Naval Academy are styled midshipmen. Five midshipmen are allowed to each Senator and Representative and delegate in Congress, and five for the Resident Commissioners from Porto Rico, five for the District of Columbia and 15 for the country at large. It is the custom for the President to give the appointments at large to the sons of naval and army officers.

A JAPANESE PILE-DRIVER.

A Japanese pile-driver consists of two guide poles supported vertically over the spot where the pile is to be driven. Mounted between the guide poles is the hammer, which consists of a heavy block kept between the guides by means of cross pieces secured to it. At the top of the guide poles are two pulleys over which pass ropes attached to the hammer at one end and each tied at the other end to a dozen hand ropes. These are seized by gangs of men on opposite sides of the guide poles who haul the weight to the top of the pile-driver and then let it drop on the pile below.

FLOWERS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES.

Did you know that some of the commonest of our garden and field flowers take their names from foreign languages? By finding out the meaning of these words we see the fancied resemblance suggested in the names.

Rhododendron comes from the word rhodon which means "rose," and dendron which means tree. Thus the whole word means rose tree. Pansies were named from the French word pensee, meaning "thought." Verbena gets its name from the Latin word for "twig," iris from the Greek word for "rainbow," and aster from the Greek word for "star."

Buttercups received their name because people thought that cows that ate them gave the best milk for making butter. It has since been proved that cows do not eat the little flowers we call "buttercups," but the name is so pretty that we have kept it.

Foxglove comes from "folk's glove," which means "fairy's glove," for the fairies were known as the "good folks."

UNCLE SAM'S THRIFT CAMPAIGN.

By Dr. Frank Crane.

The strength of any government is the people behind it.

To improve the quality of the citizens, to make

them braver, more industrious, and better disciplined should be a government's first aim.

This is more important even than to raise up vast armies and build navies, for the best defense of a nation is the character of its people.

One of the good results of the war, among many distressful, was that the Liberty bond and war stamp campaigns raised up a horde of some twenty million investors in the United States.

The Government is continuing this good work in time of peace.

On the first of January the Government placed on sale a \$1 savings stamp and a \$25 savings certificate.

This in addition to the present denominations.

The Government is also actively urging its people, even the poorest, to save and to invest in these securities.

The fundamental principle of sound investment should never be lost sight of. It is that the less one has to invest the more he should look for safety, rather than high interest.

In amounts less than \$1,000, at least, there is no security in the world so good as that of the Government.

The reason is simple. If the Government does not pay its debts, no one else will pay his debts.

The United States of America, the richest and most prosperous nation on the globe, offers to borrow of its citizens their money in any sum from 25 cents up and on amounts of \$5 and over to pay 4 per cent. interest compounded quarterly.

Here is the greatest possible inducement to have a security as absolutely safe as it is possible in this world, good interest, and your money back practically when you want it.

Every school teacher in the country ought to be an earnest agent of the Government, urging the children to save. The Government has provided booklets for this purpose and will co-operate with the teachers.

Every business concern should bring this matter to the attention of the workers.

Nothing makes for better work, more efficient production, a better spirit, and less envy, dissatisfaction, and unrest so much as the worker's knowledge that he has a little sum saved up which is growing bigger every week.

Thrift is the bedrock of national prosperity.

Thrift it is that insures the permanence of our institutions and respect for law and a man's right to what he has earned.

Bolshevism and anarchy and red revolution cannot grow in a soil of thrift.

The habit of thrift is better for a child, in terms of contentment and security, than any gifts or graces.

And the Government needs money. What better creditor is there from whom to borrow it than its own people?

We need patriotism now as much as we did in war, and what patriotism could be more intelligent and helpful than for each of us, as it lies in his power, to assist the Government in making its thrift campaign a thumping success?

—BUY U. S. S.—

A Lawyer At Nineteen

—OR—

FIGHTING AGAINST A FRAUD

By GASTON GARNE

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER IX.—(Continued.)

The force of the collision sent him and his assailant to the floor, and as Lew was the lighter of the two he went underneath. His foe was on top of him, and the hand that clutched his throat was pressing against his windpipe with terrible force.

The young lawyer felt that he was choking to death, and he realized that he must release himself from that terrible grip speedily or else succumb to it, and then he called into play all the power of his splendidly-trained muscles to break the hold.

With a sudden jerk and immense force he doubled his body like a jack-knife, sending the man on top of him flying up in the air and tearing the iron fingers from his throat.

He heard the man fall to the floor, and then he took in one deep breath and sprang to his feet.

Unfortunately the struggle had taken out of his mind all sense of direction, and for a brief instant he stood motionless, trying to think where the door might be. At random he took a step forward, just as angry exclamations came from a far corner of the room in a voice that he recognized as that of the man who called himself Thompson.

"Have you got him, Jim?" cried Amos.

"I had him and he got away from me."

"You move to the right and I'll move to the left, and we'll be sure to get him somehow."

"All right, go ahead."

Then Lew heard footsteps, and moved softly again, his hands outstretched in the darkness. He struck against something with his legs, lowered his hands, and grasped a chair.

Holding the chair over his head, Lew crouched down low, and then perceived a faint gleam of light ahead of him, which he judged was the effect of the hall lamp shining under the bottom of the door.

Quite confident that he was traveling in the right direction, he moved as softly as possible towards it, holding the chair poised for instant use.

Half way towards it he heard a stealthy step close at hand, and swung the chair with all his force.

It struck something, that was sure, for immediately there was a howl of pain and the noise of a falling body, and then Lew moved more quickly, and in a moment had bumped up against the door. He put down the chair, felt for and found the key, turned it in the lock, flung the door open and leaped out into the hallway.

"There he goes!"

"After him!"

Then Lew heard the rush of feet as the two men came flying out of the room in his wake. Down the hallway he sped, and after him they came. The young lawyer thought quickly, and he reasoned that the front door was no doubt locked with a spring lock, as is commonly the case, and he could not expect to have time to unfasten it and throw the door before the men would be upon him with united weight and strength.

Therefore he slightly moderated his pace, straining his ears to estimate the distance they were behind him, and when he thought by the patter of their feet that they were almost upon him he dropped to the floor as though he had been shot.

The trick worked to perfection.

The men were so close behind him that they could not stay their headlong rush or turn aside, and they both tumbled over him in the heaviest possible style, striking the floor of the hallway with a crash that must have jarred every bone in their bodies.

They had scarcely hit the floor, when Lew was on his feet and dashing on his way to the door. There was an ordinary spring lock to this, which he only had to move aside, and in an instant he was out in the street, the door swinging behind him.

Up and down the street the young lawyer looked, and saw only two women who were walking along, and pressing his arms to his sides he ran fleetly to the nearest corner.

A hundred yards away, leaning against a lamp-post and idly swinging his club, was a policeman.

Lew ran up to him.

"Officer," he said, "I've been assaulted in a house around the corner and I want you to go back there with me and arrest the men."

"All right," said the policeman, and ran back at his side as Lew made for the house at top speed. When they reached there the place was in total darkness, and by the light of a street lamp the officer pointed out a "To let" sign at the side of the door.

"You surely don't mean this house," he said.

"Yes, this is the house."

"Why, it's empty."

"I left two men in it a few minutes ago. My name is Lewis Rand, and I am a lawyer in the employ of John Scribner."

"Then I'll take your word in this matter, but it would be foolish to go into a dark house, and it would be wise to have help when you don't know what you're going to run up against. I'll rap for assistance and stand guard here while you get some candles."

He rapped on the pavement with his locust, and Lew ran around the corner to the nearest grocery and bought some candles and matches. He was back in a moment and found three policemen waiting for him.

The front door was forced and the house was explored from top to bottom, and all they found was just what Lew had seen, the two lamps, the table and the chairs, and the old hatrack in the hallway. Lew frankly told the story of how he had been decoyed to the house and there offered money to sell out his employer and the officers listened intently.

(To be continued.)

THE NEWS IN SHORT ARTICLES

START ON \$1; NOW RICH.

Oscar and Walter Poppert, twin sons of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Poppert, of Milwaukee, Wis., had less than \$1 between them when they left home fifteen years ago to seek their fortunes. They went to Alaska. When they returned home the other day for a visit they said they owned Alaska mining property worth several hundred thousand dollars.

They will go back to Alaska to develop their property. It is on Midnight Creek, just opposite the Guggenheim claims. The men earned their grubstake by whaling and cattle herding.

HOW A BADGER WORKS.

During the daytime the badger sleeps deep in his burrow, far out on our Western plains and prairies, and at twilight he starts forth on a night's foraging. He is a dreaded enemy of the prairie dog and the ground squirrel; and when he begins to excavate for one, nothing but solid rock or death can stop him. With the long, blunt claws of his forefeet he loosens up the dirt. Dig! dig! dig! He works as though his life depended on it, now scratching out the sides of the hole, then turning on his back to work overhead. At first he throws the dirt out between his hind legs, but soon he is too far down for that, so he banks it up back of him, then turns about, and using his chest and forward parts as a pusher, shoves it out before him. He works with such rapidity that it would be somewhat difficult for a man to overtake him with a spade.

COLORADO LAUNCHED.

The Colorado, sister ship of the Maryland, the most powerful battleship in the American navy, was launched at the yards of the New York Shipbuilding Corporation, Camden, N. J.

Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt made his first official appearance at a navy launching, delivering a speech after the ceremonies. Nineteen thousand workmen cheered the great battleship as she slid down the ways, after a bottle of Colorado mineral water had been broken over her bow by Mrs. Ruth Nicholson Melville, daughter of United States Senator Samuel D. Nicholson, of Colorado.

Assistant Secretary Roosevelt said:

"We are facing a critical period in our history. The average citizen is not aware of the danger which confronts America. There are even those who are taking a stand against our navy, and they are sincere pacifists. There are those opposed to a bigger navy, and they are fools. Both are in the same class and are equally deluded. A fool and a pacifist are the same thing."

Mr. Roosevelt was asked if there was any significance in ships of the Atlantic fleet being transferred to the Pacific, and he answered "No."

The Colorado is the largest ship ever built in the Delaware River, 624 feet long, with a displacement of 33,600 tons. She will be driven by four electric motors developing 28,000 horsepower. She will carry eight sixteen-inch guns. Her complement will be 1,448 men.

NEW YORK'S GARNET MINES.

The principal garnet mines in the United States are in Warren and Essex Counties, in the eastern Adirondacks in northeastern New York. These mines all lie within six or eight miles of the village of North Creek, the terminus of a branch of the Delaware and Hudson. The country rock is entirely pre-Cambrian, consisting of igneous rock, together with metamorphosed sediments. The three mines being worked at present are the Rogers, Sanders Bros. and the Hooper. At the Rogers mine the size of the garnets is of unusual interest, says the Engineering and Mining Journal. The matrix is a gray medium-grained non-quartziferous gneiss, through which the numerous, translucent, reddish-brown garnets are well scattered. Those with diameters up to 5 or 6 inches are common and the largest taken out are said to be the size of a bushel basket. The remarkable feature is the never-failing occurrence of a rim or envelope of pure black, medium-grained hornblende crystals completely surrounded by the black hornblende rims, which are in turn embedded in the gray gneiss, present a striking appearance in the walls of the mine pits. The garnet-bearing rock is fully three-quarters of a mile long.

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A FEARFUL SACRIFICE

BY PAUL BRADDON.

It was during the exterminating warfare which characterized the invasion of Spain by the French that a small body of cuirassiers, detached from the main division, had halted for the night at a village called Figuereras.

The appearance of this company was to the poor inhabitants a source of disagreeable anticipations, actuated as they were by natural antipathy to a domineering foe, and by anxiety for the little property acquired by the toil of congregated years.

"What ho!" cried the leader of the soldiery, as he stopped before the gate of the monastery, the only house in the hamlet that appeared capable of rendering any tolerable accommodation. "Open your doors, or, by my valiant sovereign, all your Aves will not profit you!"

And as he spoke he struck the portal with his sword, as if to prove his threats would speedily be enforced if a ready acquiescence were not accorded to his mandates.

There was a silence for a time, as though the inmates were deliberating on what course to pursue; and then the figure of an aged man became apparent, as with trembling hands he loosened the fastenings which secured the dwelling. He bore a torch, whose gleam threw a murky glare upon the men at arms, and served but indistinctly to illumine the gloomy court.

"Save you!" said the French colonel, ironically, at the same time making a lowly obeisance. "I bear my superior's greetings to your holy body, and expect good fare for my commands. The cellars are well stored, no doubt."

A crimson glow for a moment flushed the pallid cheek of the venerable father as La Ville (for that was the colonel's name) concluded his address; but it passed instantly away, and he returned no response save by a gentle inclination of the head.

La Ville regarded not his emotion, but, ordering his soldiers to dismount, and place their chargers in the spacious court yard, entered the solemn pile, accompanied by his brother officers. The clang of the spurs as they paced along the vaulted passages, escorted by their aged guide, too plainly announced to the monks the propinquity of their enemies—those wonted scoffers of all the sacred ordinances of religion—for such a character they had acquired—partly true, but principally found on the misrepresentations of those who were well aware how much such a belief would kindle patriotic zeal against them.

As they entered the refectory, the assembled brethren rose from their seats, and calmly viewed the haughty intruders.

"Excuse me, fathers," exclaimed La Ville, awed into respect by their dignified demeanor; "but my men require repose; and in these troublesome times, as little courtesy is needed, I have that plea to warrant this intrusion. My men must be provided with good cheer, or else—" and he touched the hilt of his saber significantly. "But," he continued, "I hope there will not be

occasion for proceeding to extremities; the odds there will not be occasion for proceeding to extremities; the odds are too much in our favor."

"Sir," replied the abbot, "your wishes must be obeyed, were even our desire to serve you less."

"This is an unkind opinion," returned the superior. "Deeds will convince you of its fallacy."

So saying, he motioned them to sit down, and commanded the servitors to load the table with the best the monastery could afford.

The table groaned beneath the weight of delicacies, and cordiality usurped the place where distrust so lately reigned.

The abbot left the apartment for a brief interval, and speedily returned, followed by two attendants, bearing immense silver vessels, filled with delicious wine.

"Good father," said the colonel, as he filled a goblet with the sparkling wine, "you must pledge me in a bumper!"

"The rules of our order forbid us to indulge in wine," answered the abbot, "and therefore you must excuse me and my brethren from tasting of the ruby produce of the wine."

La Ville smiled ironically, as though he thought it was hypocrisy on the father's part in refusing to drink anything stronger than the liquid spring of water.

He raised the goblet to his lips, but placed it again untasted on the board.

The monks looked upon the movement with suspicious eyes, as if to seek solution for the Frenchman's acts.

"Suspicion strikes me," cried La Ville, sternly, "and if my surmise prove correct, this shall be the last exploit you will enact! Fellow soldiers, taste not the wine; it may be poisoned; such deeds have been performed before, and by monastic artifice."

As the speaker thus addressed his auditors, every eye was riveted on the superior, whose countenance afforded no credit to the colonel's surmise.

"Drink of the wine first," continued La Ville, "you and your brethren, and then we will follow your example."

The abbot raised his eyes to heaven, and seemed for a moment buried in meditation; then, taking the proffered cup, he swallowed the contents. The entire confraternity also drank the potion.

"Now, are you satisfied?" he inquired; "now are your ungenerous doubts resolved?"

"Yes," replied the Frenchman, "and here we pledge to you, good fathers."

Cup succeeded cup, as the elated soldiers, delighted with their superior entertainment, sought to take advantage of their present favorable quarters.

"Believe me," stammered out a jovial lieutenant, "we will ever prove grateful for the kindness we have experienced!"

"When our royal eagle waves over the entire land," cried La Ville, "the brethren of this monastery shall be amply rewarded for their hospitality, and—"

"Stop your kind commendations," interrupted the abbot; "that day you shall never behold. Base tools of violence, hear me, and shudder at my words; know that the wine we drank was poisoned! Our country claimed the sacrifice, and willingly we did our duty; and though the pangs of

death are fast approaching, yet the thought that you, our enemies, must die with us is balsam to the tortured body. Does not the venom even now rankle in your veins? Speak, slaves—speak.”

Consternation seized the French as they listened to the dreadful declaration, and even then the agonizing throbs declared how true was the assertion.

Madly they rushed on their betrayers; but death was already enacting his part, and stayed their impetuous hands.

Soon the smothered groan, the frightful scream, the mingled prayer and curse, rose on the silent ear of the night.

The morning came; and of the many who had entered on the previous evening into the monastery not one remained to quit its gloomy precincts.

THE WITNESS FROM THE GRAVE.

The good people of Tautonville were not much surprised when they heard that old John Treverton had died suddenly.

He had been found by his nephew Charles sitting at the table in his library, with his head buried in his hands.

He had but two near relatives, both nephews—Charles, who had discovered his lifeless body in the library, a most exemplary young man, while his brother William was quite the reverse, and bore such a bad character that the old man, before his death, had openly expressed his intention of utterly disinheriting him if he did not show some signs of reformation.

As this he had not even made a pretense of doing, nobody was surprised when the family lawyer read the will, which was dated nearly twelve months before, and gave the whole of his property, amounting to nearly twelve thousand pounds, to his nephew, Charles, with the solitary exception of a few keepsakes to his old friends, and an annuity of two hundred and fifty to his brother William.

When, however, the lawyer had folded up the parchment, a young lawyer, who had come up to the village only a few months before, and who had attended the reading of the will on behalf of the nephew William, who was absent, rose to his feet.

“May I ask once more the date of the will you have just read?” he said.

The family lawyer repeated his assertion that it was dated nearly twelve months previously.

“Then,” the other replied, “it is my duty, on behalf of my client, William Treverton, to inform you that I have here another will, dated not three weeks ago, in which all the bequests made in any former will are superseded, and the whole of the deceased gentleman’s property given unconditionally to my client.”

The following morning the new legatee arrived at home, and prepared to take possession of his property.

Three days afterwards the inspector of police was seated in his office, when the card of a young doctor in Tautonville was brought to him. On the pasteboard were written the words:

“Important and confidential.”

When they were alone together the young doctor stood silent for a moment or two, evidently collecting his thoughts together.

“I merely ask for information,” his visitor hastened to explain. “Suppose a case. If a man of my profession—merely as an illustration, you understand—were, for scientific purposes, to disinter a corpse which had been buried, under the impression that the causes of death had been natural, and that physicians were to find undoubted proofs that murder had been done, would he be free from any penalty for his own offense?”

“There would be exterminating circumstances, certainly,” the other answered, after a moment’s reflection. “For instance, were the case your own. Had you disinterred a corpse for the purpose of dissection, and found the proofs of which you speak, beyond the fact of detention until you had given your evidence, you would be acquitted without any penalty whatever.”

“Then the case is my own. Nearly a week ago, a man of considerable property in the town of Tautonville, died, it was supposed, of an apopleptic fit, and three days ago was buried. The following night, a fellow student and myself disinterred the body for the purpose of dissection. When we came to operate upon it, we found that a fit had not been the cause of death at all, but that it was a premeditated and most decidedly an ingenious murder!”

“Had he been poisoned?”

“No. That had been avoided probably for fear of a medical examination at the inquest. A slender wire of tempered steel had been driven through the back of the head, penetrating the brain. It had drawn but one drop of blood, which might have been overlooked in even the closest examination, as the hair almost wholly concealed it.”

The same afternoon two rough-looking men called upon the new heir to the Treverton property.

“What do you want, disturbing me this way?” he asked roughly as they entered.

“We want to know, Bill Treverton,” one said in tones even more rough and coarse than the other’s own, “where you get all the steel wire from? We’ve got uncles with money of our own, and it’s a long way ahead of waiting until they die of their own accord.”

“What do you mean?” he gasped, his face suddenly becoming livid. “Who are you?”

“We’re disciples of him what raises the dead,” the man answered, with a rough laugh. “Body-snatchers, if you like it better, and we’ve got the deadwood on you, my daisy, and we mean to keep it, and make you divvy up to the last penny.”

“I do not understand what you mean,” he said; “but I hate to be annoyed in this way. If you really have desecrated my uncle’s grave, replace his body there to-night, and I will give you a thousand pounds each to go to America, where you can begin life honestly anew.”

“Then give me your hand, and it’s a bargain.”

The other held out his hand willingly.

The next moment his hand was seized in a vise-like grip, and before he realized his position, a pair of handcuffs were locked upon his wrists.

At his trial, which came on three weeks later, a clear case was found against him.

He was sentenced to death. As there was no proof of any complicity against the lawyer, he escaped with a term of ten years for the forgery of the will.

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

ONLY HOTEL IN THE WORLD FOR HORSES.

What is believed to be the world's only hotel for horses is in Charlottenburg, near Berlin. It not only provides luxurious quarters for the horses of the Berlin Bus Company, but rents many "rooms" for horses brought into the city. It is four stories high in back and three in front, with a basement. On each floor there is a roomy "porch" running the full length of the building. These "porches" are used with an inclined runway for entering or leaving the "hotel." A regular hotel service is provided for the "guests."

ONE-THIRD LIVES IN CITIES.

More than a third of the country's total population in 1920 and nearly 70 per cent. of the urban dwellers—37,770,114 persons to be exact—lived in cities of 25,000 inhabitants or more. Census Bureau figures today showed approximately 36 per cent. of the total population was grouped in 287 communities in this class.

There were 2,739 municipalities having 2,500 or more inhabitants, with an aggregate population of 54,314,476. Of these, 459 ranged between 10,000 and 25,000, with an aggregate of 6,942,742; 723 had more than 5,000 but less than 10,000 inhabitants with a total of 5,008,732, and 1,320 had less than 5,000, with an aggregate population of 4,592,888.

2,000 LONDON CHORUS GIRLS OUT OF JOBS.

Unemployment in theatreland, like that in other professions and trades, is widespread here at present, it being estimated that there are now over 2,000 chorus girls and "small-part" actresses out of work, and it is feared that unless conditions improve immediately many producers will have to go out of business.

Oscar Ashe, one of the leaders in theatrical circles here, says that the problem is intensified because so many people come into the profession without credentials. Naturally they are suffering. Touring companies are not leaving London for the provinces at present, and consequently there are hundreds of girls who cannot get employment.

140 LASHES FALL ON 3 ROBBERS' BACKS.

All records of the Delaware whipping post for 35 years were broken March 26, when four convicts received 140 lashes from a cat o' nine tails administered by Warden Plummer at the Newcastle County Workhouse. The victims were Leonard Barrett, robbery, 40 lashes; Horace Archie and John Richardson, highway robbery, 40 lashes each, and Warren Lewish, 20 lashes. The men must also serve 51 years.

Previous to to-day, the greatest number of lashes given felons in one day was in 1873 when four bank robbers received 160 lashes. A law passed this month by the Delaware Legislature makes the penalty for highway robbery and theft more rigid with the object of breaking up crime of this character and causing criminals to give Delaware a wide berth.

LAUGHS

"I see Jones is going to write a novel." "I never thought he had imagination enough for that." "The deuce he hasn't. He's been making out expense accounts for nearly eleven years."

Practical Aunt—Do you think you are qualified to become the wife of a poor man? Sweet Girl—Oh, yes; it's fixed. We are to live in a cottage, and I know how to make cottage pudding.

"How hollow it sounds!" said a patient under the movement cure, as the physicial was vigorously pounding his chest. "Oh, that's nothing," said the doctor; "wait till we get to the head."

Stable-keeper—By the way, shall I put in an extra buffalo? English Blood—Couldn't you let me 'ave an 'orse, you know? Er—er—rather not drive a buffalo first time, you know.

Vexed Wife—There is no calamity that can befall a woman that I have not suffered. Amiable Husband—Wrong, my dear; now, you have never been a widow. Vexed Wife—I said calamity, sir!

"I hope," said the thrifty old farmer, "that you have something laid up for a rainy day." "Sure thing," replied his nephew from the city. "I've got seventeen borrowed umbrellas."

"Pa," said the boy, looking up from his book, "what does a man's 'better half' mean?" "Usually, my son," replied the father from behind the evening paper, "she means exactly what she says!"

Dobbs—Johnny, if I give you a dime, can I trust you to convey this note safely to your sister without any one seeing it? Johnny—Yes—er—but it would be much safer for a quarter.

An uncomfortable and generous-sized looking lady walked into a New York drug store a few days ago and asked for a box of talcum powder. "Mennen's?" asked the clerk, politely. "No, vimmen's," was the disgusted reply.

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

LAYS EGGS DAILY ON PIG'S BACK.

A pig and pullet, who are barnyard pals, have combined in a daily bacon and egg demonstration on the farm of Mrs. Harold Snowden, Yarmouth, Mass. Every morning the brisk young hen hops on the broad surface of the porker's back, nestles down and lays an egg. The pig lies motionless until Mrs. Snowden, notified by the bird's proud cackling, collects the latest addition to the family's food supply.

MAKES HENS LAY.

Harry Howell, chicken fancier of Hope, Ark., is demonstrating that it pays to properly house and care for chickens. Howell has a pen of fifty-five hens that are producing from thirty-five to forty eggs every day. He has a specially constructed house in which he keeps his flock warm all the time. Howell also believes in the artificial light plan for encouraging hens to lay. He has his scratch pens well lighted and the hens are out until 8 o'clock every night. He turns on the lights at 5 o'clock in the morning.

NATURAL ICE-BOX MADE IN A WELL.

In the Northwest farmers make their own refrigerators by digging a well about twenty-five feet deep, putting some rough stones on the bottom and filling the well with snow. Water is then poured on the snow, making a pillar of almost solid ice, some of which will remain all the summer.

The stones at the bottom are for drainage. Foodstuffs are placed on the top and covered. A ladder is fastened down the side of the well so that as the upper ice thaws access can be had to the ice below.

COW HIDES.

Walter Campbell of Crawford County, Pennsylvania, thinks he has a cow with intelligence. He found the animal sick the other day and, stroking her fondly on the back, said: "Well, bossy, I guess you'll have to have some medicine."

Then he went to the house for the medicine. When he returned he could not find the cow at first, but finally discovered her lying snugly in the hay on the second floor. The cow had climbed a short flight of stairs in his absence.

Campbell tells his neighbors the cow evidently understood what he said and was hiding from him. At any rate, the neighbors had to come to the barn and help lower her from the haymow.

NO EXECUTIONS IN LAST THIRTY YEARS.

There is a growing public demand for the re-introduction of capital punishment in Denmark. Death sentences may be imposed by the Danish courts, but no criminal has been executed in this country for the last thirty years. In the recent past, however, there has been an increasing number of murderers, and the people declare that more drastic punishment must be decreed by the government and courts.

"Every means in our power," said Minister of Justice Rytter recently, "will be used to secure public safety against violence, robbery and similar

crimes. Justice, according to the strictest reading of the existing laws, will be meted out to persons convicted of such offenses.

"All petitions presented for reprieve in connection with cases of violence will be refused, including motorists who are sentenced for criminally reckless driving."

A POPULAR HANGMAN.

One of Vienna's most respected citizens, writes the London Daily Mail, is Josef Lang, the "last imperial and royal executioner of Austria, a handsome and imposing old gentleman in his sixty-sixth year, who is still active deputy chief of the fire brigade in Simmering, the suburb in which he resides, and probably the most popular man in the district.

His volume of reminiscences, just published, and edited by Dr. Oscar Schalk, reveals him as a man of humane and generous disposition. He has brought up fifteen children, of whom only two were his own. He became executioner at forty-five, having been successively carpenter, soldier, stoker and coffee-house keeper.

He is very proud of the fact that his longest execution took only 65 seconds, the shortest 45.

But the most interesting of his disclosures relate to women of all classes who sought interviews with him at which they often made determined amatory advances. Some were content to look into his eyes or touch his hand. Many craved a thread of silk which had formed part of a noose actually used by him. Superstition was their main incentive.

He was once, on going to the governor's house to report himself, as he was bound to do on arrival, introduced to an aristocratic "afternoon tea," for which he was always well dressed on professional duty, as "Hoffmeister Lang." There was some consternation when his identity was discovered, but this soon gave place to a fever of curiosity, and women surrounded him for hours with a fusillade of questions—and stole his pocket handkerchief as a memento of the occasion.

Women offered him anything he liked to ask if he would enable them to be present at an execution. He could take a certain number of men as his assistants, giving in their names beforehand, but he never took even men who had not some genuine scientific ground for asking, and never women, though there were many women who were quite willing to act as his actual assistants. He never had to execute a woman and was heartily glad of it.

If only for its sidelights on superstition this is a remarkable book. Lang's pre-war correspondence, much of which his wife often burned unopened, consisted mainly of requests for locks of hair, his own or else from a "patient," and for all imaginable articles that had been touched by him or by a hanged murderer. And Lang himself is not without superstition. He always carries about with him a tiny skein containing a thread from each silk noose he has used to launch a man into eternity.

INTERESTING NEWS ARTICLES

BOY FIGHTS MAD DOG.

When a rabid dog attacked his two small sisters while the children were on their way home from school at Burgaw, near Wilmington, N. C., Lon Carr, aged 9, grasped the animal about the neck and threw it to the ground, and although bitten in five places refused to let go until help came and his sisters escaped unharmed. The boy is under treatment.

BATTLE RELICS IN SEEDLINGS.

Cloth of all kinds and descriptions interwoven with the roots, also bits of bones, leather, rubber and buttons, were found in the sprouts of nursery stock fruit trees which arrived in Salt Lake City, Utah, recently from France. The trees were evidently grown on the battlefields of France, and in the roots of one of the sprouts was a strip of bloodstained bandage. One of the trees had grown from the seed through the link of a large watch chain.

BLACKBERRIES A PEST.

Blackberries thrive more luxuriantly in Australia than in Europe or America, their growth being so rapid that in many places they are regarded as an agricultural pest. Like the first rabbits, the original blackberry vines have grown and multiplied until they bid fair to cover the face of the country. The bushes are not cultivated—they can look after themselves, as many Australian agriculturists are painfully aware—but the jam made from their fruit is sufficiently tempting to make one forget their unwelcome presence on the farm.

THE HYDROSCOPE.

Among the latest articles which ingenious minds are always devising for the benefit of the fisherman is the hydroscope. There are very few anglers, probably, who, as they have waited, with more or less patience for the fish to bite, have not longed to get a peep into the water, just to see if there were any fish about or not. Bass especially congregate in certain localities where the food supply is good and there are rocks to play around, and as a rule remain there all day long. It is an immense convenience, therefore, for the bass fishermen to be able to look down into the water and survey the prospect. A simple means of surveying the bottom of the water has been successfully tried. A pail with the bottom knocked out, or a narrow box, open at both ends or furnished with a stout pane of glass at the end in the water, has been found to answer fairly well, says the Philadelphia Inquirer. Those who use the box or pail get a good deal of fun out of it and learn unsuspected things sometimes, as when an angler saw a big bass deliberately drive away smaller fish from, and stand guard over, his carefully baited hook. Whether it was solicitude for the bass' young companion or an ordinary case of dog-in-the-manger he could not make out.

MOTHER SHIPTON'S PROPHECY

Mother Shipton's Prophecy was a clever hoax, the production of a joking newspaper man, Charles Hindley, of Brighton, England, who published it about the year 1862. He then claimed that it was a reissue of a prediction originally announced by a Mother Shipton in the year 1488, and republished in 1641. Hindley, about the year 1873, confessed that he was the originator of the hoax. Here is the famous prophecy, as several of our readers have requested us to print it.

"Carriages without horses shall go,
And accidents fill the world with woe.
Around the world thoughts shall fly
In the twinkling of an eye.
Waters shall yet more wonders do—
How strange, yet they shall be true.
The world upside down shall be,
And gold be found at roots of tree.
Through hills man shall ride,
And no horse nor ass shall be at his side.
Under water men shall walk,
Shall ride, shall sleep, shall talk.
In the air men shall be seen
In white, in black, in green.
Iron in the water shall float
As easy as a wooden boat.
Gold shall be found and shown
In a land that's not now known.
Fire and water shall wonders do;
England shall at last admit a Jew.
The world to an end shall come
In eighteen hundred and eighty-one."

GIANT BLACKBERRIES.

A giant blackberry has just been discovered growing wild on the mountain slopes of Cundinamarca province, Colombia, and a few plants have been brought to the United States by Wilson Poneno, agricultural explorer of the Office of Foreign Seed and Plant Introduction, Department of Agriculture.

In describing this new fruit for the Journal of Heredity, Mr. Poneno writes: "A species of *Rubus* which produces, as a wild plant, fruits two and a half inches long by an inch and a half in thickness, and these of fairly good quality for eating, cannot fail to possess great interest to North American horticulturists."

The giant berry grows at elevations of between 8,000 and 10,000 feet, but so near the Equator that frost is unknown even at that altitude, and in a region where there is much moisture throughout the year.

The plants have never been cultivated, but the berries are commonly to be found in the markets of Bogota and other large cities. Their seeds are rather large, the flesh is not as juicy as most of the cultivated blackberries, the flavor resembles that of the loganberry more than that of cultivated berries, and the color is a light crimson, tending to become wine-colored when overripe.

Mr. Poneno suggests that the giant Colombian berry would do well in the Puget Sound region or in the sandy loams of the Gulf States. He believes that cultivation will produce fruits of greater size.

GREATEST DISASTER IN ANNALS OF FORESTRY

Eight billion board feet of timber was destroyed by the cyclone that ripped a seventy-five mile path, thirty miles wide, through the forests of the Olympic peninsula, Washington State January 29. Reports from the Forest Service made public recently class the storm as "the greatest disaster ever recorded in the annals of forestry and lumbering."

The wind registered 132 miles an hour before instruments at the Weather Bureau station were destroyed. It is estimated to have reached 150 miles thereafter. Practically all standing timber over 2,250 square miles went down in a tangled mass obliterating roads and telegraph lines and with little chance of salvage.

No human lives were lost, but buildings were destroyed and many animals perished, including elk.

"If fire should gain headway in the devastated area," the forester reported, "the most stupendous conflagration ever known in this country would result. Fifteen billion feet (of timber) is exposed in the adjoining part of the Olympic national forest."

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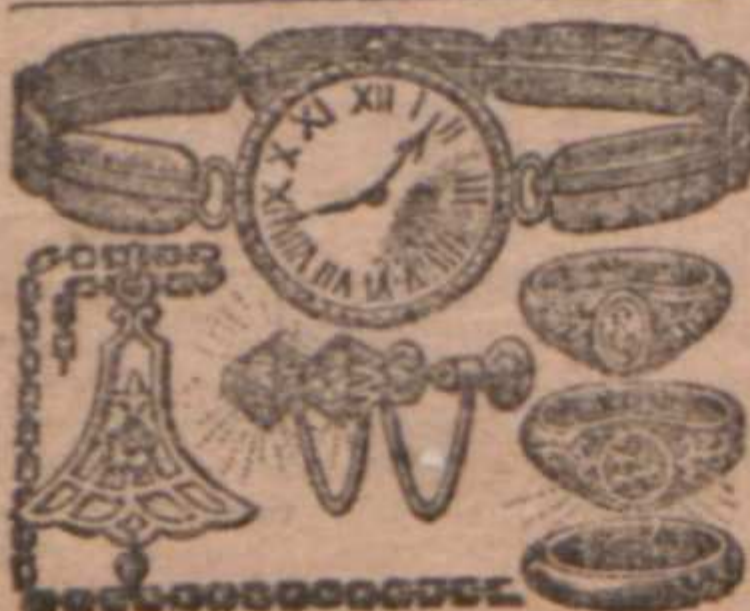
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The hair-net business has become of great importance to the province of Shantung, which now provides practically the entire supply for the market. Thus the hair net worn by the veriest stay-at-home in America has doubtless crossed the ocean three times.

Since the abolition of the queues after the recent fall of the Manchu dynasty, long pig tails of Chinese hair are no longer readily available. The dealers are relying more and more on the combings of women, although there are men who make it a part of their business to let their hair grow to about eight inches in length and then sell it to the barber who in turn sells it to the small trader in hair. For exporting, hair is assorted according to length and tied in bunches. Most of the exports go to England, France and the United States.

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